PREVIEW THE HOTTEST ATLAS AND ENCYCLOPEDIA PROGRAMS INSIDE!

EDUCATION
REFERENCE
GAMES

CD ROM power ™

YOUR GUIDE TO THE INTERACTIVE WORLD

Preserve Your Home Videos on CD-ROM Forever

CD HISTORY OF COMICS
p. 58

BUILD MATH SKILLS AT HOME
p. 42

PLAYED MYST? TRY GADGET
p. 84

INTERACTIVE WORLD'S FAIR

THIS CD-ROM IS YOUR TICKET TO THE FIRST THEME PARK IN CYBERSPACE

MAIN MENU

PAGE35

PAGE10

CDROM**power**

PAGE**54**

ON THE COVER: A head-spinning shot from Brian Eno's Head Candy, reviewed this issue on p.88

HOW TO REACH CD-ROM POWER:

We can be reached on-line for comments and suggestions. We'd be glad to hear any input you may have about our magazine. E-mail can be sent to us via any of the following on-line systems:
America Online: YoungJeffr
CompuServe: 74774,1634
Internet:
YOUNGJEFFR@AOL.COM
FAX: (310) 247-1708

Or, if you prefer to reach us via snail-mail:
CD-ROM Power
ATTN: Reader Mail
9171 Wilshire Blvd.,
Suite 300
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

If you'd like more information on how to sign up on these E-mail systems call and tell them CD-ROM POWER sent you!
America Online: (800) 827-6364
CompuServe: (800) 848-8990
GEnie: (800) 638-9636

PAGE**86**

Have you Seen My CDs?

As Spring approaches, our magazine is sprouting in new directions. The winds of change are also affecting the multimedia marketplace. Games have traditionally held their place at the top of the CD-ROM bestseller list, but recently the chart-topping trend has begun to lean toward educational and reference-oriented titles. You'll find that our magazine reflects this change by dedicating the largest chunk of coverage to CD-ROMs that fall into these two categories.

I judge the relevance of my work by the number of people around me who ask for free stuff. Lately, it seems that the floodgates of technology-hungry moochers have been opened. Parents flock to me wanting to *borrow* educational discs for their children. Businessmen stalk me, demanding CD-ROMs full of national phone directory listings and other business tools. The staff of a local film magazine borrows Microsoft's *Cinemania* on a regular basis. Everyone in our office wants a piece of the action. I've got subscription people combing my cabinets for gifts for their nephews. There are Advertising people checking my CD-ROM games so they can, and I quote, "better understand the subject matter." Even my boss makes the occasional trip to our CD-ROM archives on a mission to score reading software for his children or historical titles for his computer-genius father. Our very own copy editor, a Brit with a fascination for evil figures in American media, can often be spotted taking a peek in the cabinet, on the lookout for discs about Watergate or Charles Manson.

When I was an editor on our sister magazine, which covers computer games, I was rarely accosted by the people around me for free software.

I wouldn't want to insinuate that games are becoming any less important than the other types of software we cover. In fact, throughout computer software history, games have been the proving ground of new technologies and ideas. If it weren't for ID Software's *Doom*, I don't think we'd see the 3-D navigable Interactive World's Fair (see cover story p. 24).

But the latest statistics from two separate market researchers, PC Data and Baker & Taylor show that, in the CD-ROM market, sales of Educational and Reference titles are eclipsing the sales of games. Until recently, these lists have been dominated by games, but now seven of the top ten titles on the Baker & Taylor list are *not* games.

This may indicate a decline in gaming consumers, but it more likely indicates an increase in the amount of consumers who want other titles, while the number of gamers has remained constant. Let's face it, games have no point other than entertainment. Their utility level is nil. And I can't recommend computer games for blowing off steam, because they're generally quite realistic simulations of nerve-racking situations.

I bring all of this to your attention at the risk of burning every single bridge I've ever built in the entertainment software industry.

While companies are developing entertainment software full-speed ahead, they'd better be wary of the new kind of consumer who is less willing to suspend disbelief for entertainment that isn't as beautiful or accessible as television. This consumer is more concerned with the usefulness of a particular CD-ROM than its entertainment value. He/She is looking to justify the computer's two-thousand-dollar price tag.

I hope you'll find in our pages the particular CD-ROMs that interest you. And if not, I assure you we'll cover them as soon as they're returned to me.

—JEFFREY ADAM YOUNG
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Celluloid, Life expectancy before deterioration: **50 years** **Video,** life expecta

The preservation of memories is something that's precious to almost all people. Your first steps. Graduation from kindergarten. Learning to ride a bike. Although you may not remember all of these events yourself, someone probably 'remembered' them on your behalf. In the past several decades, many precious memories have been preserved through the use of home movies.

The home movie has helped to preserve a bygone era on celluloid. Since the late 1950s, when the Super-8 camera became an affordable alternative to still pictures, American families have been miniature movie studios. Most everyone can remember a father or uncle fooling around with a camera at the family barbeque and a brother or sister hamming it up for the camera. Home movies have become as much a part of Americana as the Cadillac and the chili dog. The preservation of home movies has, for the last decade or so, been done on video.

I remember going to Walt Disney World and riding Space Mountain. I vividly recall the end of the ride on the "moving sidewalk," where we were treated to a glimpse of the some of home video recording instruments of the future. RCA presented an expo of video recorders that they said would, in the near future, become a part of everyday life, and they did.

One of my friends had a bunch of home movies transferred from super eight to video tape to help celebrate his parents' 25th anniversary. This is not an uncommon occurrence. However, the preservation of home movies on video does very little to help extend their shelf-life.

We have found that video tape quality deteriorates drastically after the first ten years. What is going to happen to precious memories over the course of time? The most viable option for preserving family history is on CD-ROM.

Film stock doesn't last much more than 50 years without restoration. Many movie studios have found that the classic films in their vaults are deteriorating. Restoration is costly and doesn't always yield favorable results.

Television video, which deteriorates quite rapidly, could now be preserved on CD-ROM for future generations to enjoy. The need for CD-ROM restoration is something that has to be considered for all forms

DON'T M
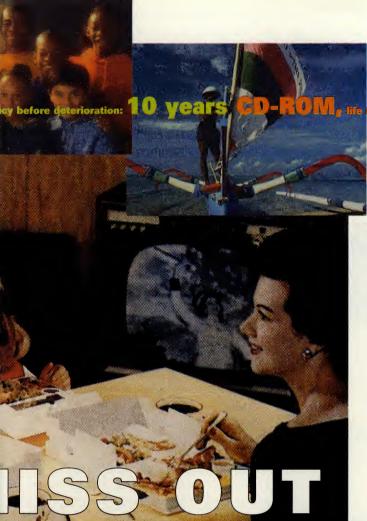
of film preservation.

First-run prints of films should be stored on to CD-ROM. This would preserve the quality of the movie for an indefinite period of time. The idea of having movies on CD-ROM is not new. The market for them, however, has not proven to be significant. It seems that if people want high-quality movie presentation, they opt for laser discs. Preserving home movies on CD-ROM appears to be a more viable marketplace.

The ability to preserve images on CD-ROM is something that Kodak has made available to the public for the last two years. The Kodak Photo CD preserves scanned 35mm pictures on to CD. One of the advantages of this system is that it's compatible with IBMs, Macintoshes, 3DO machines, or CD-I players. With the flexibility of this format already proven, let's take a look at the benefits of Kodak Photo CD.

One standard Photo CD master-disc can store the images from four 24-exposure film-rolls. There are also higher grade discs, giving the user a wider variety of options. With the *Portfolio Disc* you can combine images (up to 700) with text, stereo audio, graphics, and programmed access. These features

...cy before deterioration: **10 years** CD-ROM, life expectancy before deterioration: **?**

ISS OUT

combine to create a truly unique multimedia experience. The newly released *Catalog Disc* from Kodak allows the user to store large numbers (as many as 4,400) of images.

For viewing your collection of images, Kodak also makes a number of viewing systems, which range in price from $249 to $449. To create individual image portfolios, there is a software system available for both Mac and IBM. This software allows the user to import Photo CD master-disc images to current applications. The user is also given various options, including the ability to crop, zoom, and rotate images.

Given these possibilities with still images, the future for movie and video storage looks very bright. Morphing programs are now quite accessible for still images. Soon they will be available for scanned moving images, giving the home user a myriad of new home-movie possibilities. The visual tricks once guarded so closely by Hollywood will soon be available to the public. Multimedia is at the dawn of a new age. Not only are you going to be able to store moving images onto CD-ROM, your options for manipulating those images will be greatly enhanced.

With the advent of the laser disc player, the home video market received a tremendous jolt. The laser disc player gives the viewer a much higher quality picture, one that hardly deteriorates over time. One of the results of this expanded quality is that noted filmmakers have given over their personal footage or interviews to be shown with features on laser disc. The response by cinemaphiles has been growing because of the tremendous quality of product. Such may be the case with the preservation of home movies on CD-ROM.

The advances in personal video recorders in the past decade have been tremendous. The video camera has gone from being a clunky two-piece unit, to a shoulder unit and now a hand-held one. Along with improvements in size, the video camera is now armed with an arsenal of options which give the videomaker more creative control. When scanned moving pictures on CD-ROM become an affordable alternative, there will be a greater quality of home video. By using a CD-ROM, which causes no physical wear, the user will be able to preserve the quality of the picture. Not only will memories be preserved, they will not diminish in quality.

Is quality CD-ROM video-storage an option in the near future? If you look at the titles that integrate QuickTime and QuickTime for Windows, you'll find that the quality is currently lacking. Most video clips have very poor picture-quality. The images are usually hazy or distorted. Poor picture quality is fine for a game but it won't serve the needs of consumers wishing to preserve their precious memories. One of the biggest problems with QuickTime programs is the sound sync. Many times its sound and image don't match up very well.

While the market is there, it's just impossible right now to predict an end to the image-saving blues. Technology has not quite caught up to the needs of the consumer yet. Unfortunately it doesn't appear that we will see a definitive solution to this difficult paradox in the near future.

Spokespeople for Kodak are not willing to give a date on when the Home-video-to-CD-ROM technology might be available. At this point in time, it doesn't seem that saving home movies on CD-ROM will be an easily affordable option in the very near future.

AMNESTY INTERACTIVE

In 1948 the United Nations adopted the Universal Human Rights Declaration and the preservation of these principles is the goal of Amnesty International. Political and social action is taken to a new level with the new *Amnesty Interactive* CD-ROM. This program documents violations of individual rights and prompts users to take actions to help free "prisoners of conscience."

Amnesty International is an independent, worldwide human-rights organization working impartially for the release of all prisoners of conscience, for fair and prompt trials for political prisoners, and for an end to torture and executions. Since its foundation in 1961, Amnesty International has adopted or investigated more than 43,500 cases. Of these

uals. Voices uses the writings and songs of activists working with Amnesty. Finally, Places gives a nation-by-nation account of rights violations by governments all over the globe.

For many years, Nelson Mandela served as the focal point of the international rights movement. Since his release and subsequent rise to political power, no one figure has dominated this arena. The stories featured in *Amnesty Interactive* are no less interesting than Mandela's and the urgent need for a spirited defense of personal rights is still very much a part of global life.

Amnesty Interactive is a slick, colorful program that helps to promote true interactivity by prompting the individual to action. This is not a depressing

cases, over 40,750 are now closed.

The voice of Amnesty International has probably been heard loudest through its memorial concerts. However, it's apparent that the message isn't being heard loudly enough. Musicians Michael Stipe, Peter Gabriel, and Bono are all outspoken activists for Amnesty and now the cause they all support can be easily understood through the use of *Amnesty Interactive*.

The program is split into five different sections: Rights, Stories, Voices, Places, and Ideas. Rights explains the rights the United Nations deems applicable to all people. Ideas is comprised of different individual philosophies on individual freedoms through the ages. This section chronicles everyone from Immanuel Kant to Martin Luther King. Stories details rights violations by focusing on nine individ-

disc; rather it's enlightening and empowering. Amnesty is committed to making governments respond to the will of the people. Letters and phone calls can make a difference in helping to protect the innocent and provide a better world to live in.

Ignition has developed this disc and it's being published by Voyager, the people who first brought P.C. to the PC. Both companies have produced this CD-ROM on a non-profit basis, the ten dollar price has been established to cover the costs of development and advertising. Hopefully this joint venture will help to set a standard for CD-ROMs with a worthwhile goal.

The *Amnesty Interactive* program can be ordered from Voyager at 1(800) 446-2001 and is currently available for Mac only (a windows version is due for release later this year).

THE WALL

While most Americans are familiar with the Vietnam Memorial, few probably have an understanding of the history behind it. Informing and enlightening people about this event in American history is what *The Wall* aims to accomplish. Magnet Interactive Studios has produced this CD-ROM title in conjunction with the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Fund to help pay tribute to the 58,000 Americans who lost their lives serving in Southeast Asia.

The Vietnam war was a difficult time for both the people who served and the nation they represented. One of the important elements of this unique program is its sense of history. News footage, newspaper and magazine articles, photographs and letters help to make sense of the Vietnam war. Over 45 minutes of video footage also highlights this section. *The Wall* should serve as an invaluable tool to help educators teach and discuss what has hitherto been a vague part of many American History classes.

In itself, the black granite wall is an impressive sight. What's more impressive are the names on it.

The Vietnam Veterans' memorial was created to help re-enfranchise the veterans and pay tribute to the casualties. *The Wall* gives personal information about everyone who lost their life defending their country in a world away from home. The history of the wall's design and construction is an integral part of this program.

A special section of the program is dedicated to the often overlooked women who served in the Vietnam conflict. It contains songs, poems, and letters written by the women themselves.

One of the most interesting parts of this very exciting program is a look at 300 items left at the wall. Each of these items is discussed and a personal history is attached to it.

This program will be available for both the Mac and the PC. *The Wall* represents a new era of exploratory history for CD-ROM.

THE WALL
MAC/IBM PC
MAGNET INTERACTIVE: (202) 625-1111

NAME THAT TUNE!

RADIO ACTIVE

Does everyone remember the television show *Name That Tune*? The wacky '70s show that tested your knowledge of music. Now, you can once again test your knowledge at home with Sanctuary Woods' music trivia game show, *Radio Active*. Only this time it's got something of a '90s flair.

Take one part David Letterman, one part *Name That Tune*, one part *Jeopardy*, and one part *Trivial Pursuit* and you'll have a hip, lively music trivia show with an offbeat sense of humor. All of the best and worst pop and rock songs of the '60s, '70s and '80s are here, as well as a bizarre host in a loud suit. *Radio Active* integrates high-quality video into a computer-rendered game show set in a colorful style reminiscent of *The Jetsons* TV series. Sound quality and the visual environment are also top-notch.

Aimed at players from teenagers to adults, *Radio Active* should be interactive fun at its best.

RADIO ACTIVE
MAC/IBM $24.95
SANCTUARY WOODS (415) 578-6340

A LOADSTAR IS BORN

Are you ready to be transported to the 22nd century and take the helms of a vintage craft on a dangerous mission? You'd better be if you want to play the action-packed science fiction epic *Loadstar: The Legend Of Tully Bodine*.

The hot young company Rocket Science brings you this interactive movie/game that stars Ned Beatty and Barry Primus. You play Tully Bodine, the veteran skipper of Loadstar, who must get a cargo of contraband camels off the Moon. *Loadstar* features stunning graphics and special effects, full motion and full screen video, and a soundtrack that will leave you sweating. Rocket Scientist Ron Cobb's original story is the first episode of what promises to be an exciting space odyssey.
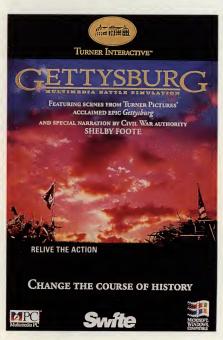
LOADSTAR: THE LEGEND OF TULLY BODINE
IBM $69.95
ROCKET SCIENCE GAMES, INC.
(415) 328-8181

COMPUTER CIVIL WAR

If you didn't get enough of the civil war in Turner Pictures' four-hour epic *Gettysburg,*

Turner Interactive has something to keep that war going. War buffs will enjoy the latest CD-ROM that takes you into the heart of the civil war. *Gettysburg: Multimedia Battle Simulation* is a unique interactive look at a significant point in american history.

Whether you want to experience the battle of Gettysburg or assume command and change the course of history, the choice is yours. Issue orders to engage the enemy, aim artillery and infantry fire, or dig in and defend— it's up to you how to run your platoon. Special features include scenes from the movie in high-quality full-motion video, mini-documentaries highlighting topics such as weather, terrain, and rifles of 1863.
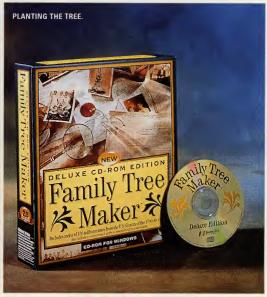
So if you just want to see the battle or you actually want to live it, *Gettysburg* is the one to check out.

GETTYSBURG
IBM $69.95
TURNER INTERACTIVE (404) 827-2890

NEVER FORGET YOUR FAMILY

If you have a large family and you constantly forget birthdays, anniversaries, and whose son is whose, then the *Family Tree Maker* is your ideal organizational CD-ROM kit. No more scrap books and note pads with everyone's background on it, this program lets you organize your entire family at the click of a button.

You can actually enter up to 2,000,000 relatives! No joke. Once you have entered a few names, a mouse click allows you to view and print family trees, birthday calenders, mailing labels, and much more. It automatically memorizes repeated facts, such as city names, and can instantly find any person or fact when you type a single word. You can even easily include photos without the use of a scanner. Just ask your photo developer to put your next roll of film onto a Kodak Photo CD and simply slip the CD into your drive and put the pictures in the *Family Tree Maker*. You can even have old photos put onto CD!

To top it off, everything can be printed out so the entire family can enjoy your project. Be smart, be organized, your family is important.
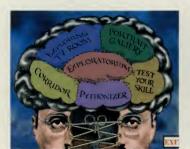
FAMILY TREE MAKER
IBM $69.95
BANNER BLUE SOFTWARE
(510) 794-6850

NOTHING LIKE GOOD
OLD BRITISH HUMOR.

COMPLETE WASTE OF TIME

Monty Python fans will go completely bonkers over this new interactive multimedia CD-ROM thingy. 7th Level brings you *Monty Python's Complete Waste Of Time*, an interactive joy that takes you through the highlights of the BBC-TV episodes.

Over 30 classic sketches are included, and you can even sing along with unpleasant tunes like the "Lumberjack Song," the "Monkey Song," and of course, the immortal "Spam." Arcade-style games are also featured on *Complete Waste Of Time*. Test your shooting skills by gunning down flying pigs, but look out because these pigs fire back, and let's just say it's not bullets but something brown. With the CD-ROM you also get a complete customization kit included free (also sold separately on diskette for cheapskates). *Desktop Pythonizer* lets you revitalize dreary Windows events with Noisy Bits, a collection of more than 40 classic one-liners and sound effects. There's also the *Wallpaper Zapper* that creates instant wallpaper from any scene.

Monty Python is long gone now, but their memory lives on forever in this silly little disc. If you have time to kill you can completely waste it with this.

MONTY PYTHON'S COMPLETE WASTE OF TIME
IBM $59.95
7TH LEVEL (214) 437-4858

CARMEN'S BACK

Everyone's favorite detective game has now made its way to CD-ROM. *Where In The USA Is Carmen Sandiego?* is the second recent release for IBM in the best-selling Carmen Sandiego series by Broderbund Software, Inc. Whether you're a kid or an adult, you can enjoy the sights of America while going through over 3,000 geographical clues that lead you to the capture of Carmen Sandiego and her gang. This time around there's a new feature. Unique to this CD-ROM version is the ACME State-A-Base. This allows the player to view a state's topographical map, learn facts particular to each state, and listen to a description spoken by a person with a unique regional accent. Created in 1985, the award-winning *Carmen Sandiego* series has sold over 3.5 million copies to date. God, can't anybody arrest her already?

WHERE IN THE USA IS CARMEN SANDIEGO? IBM $49.95 BRODERBUND SOFTWARE, INC. (415) 382-4400
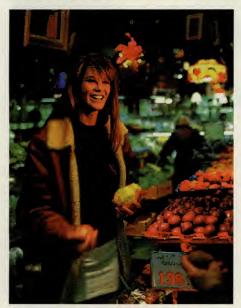
DINING WITH THE RICH AND FAMOUS

Ever wonder what your favorite celebrity's ideal meal consisted of? *With The Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous Cookbook,* your questions can now be answered. Journey through the recipe books of those who make an art out of entertaining people and those who simply love to cook.

As you probably guessed, Robin Leach walks you through this cookbook, filled with over 30 minutes of video and 350 photographs of celebrities. The user can select a recipe from four chapters: Extravagant affairs, Casual entertaining, Relaxing at home, or Famous recipes of the rich and famous. Some of the unique dishes included come from the likes of Elizabeth Taylor, Ivana Trump,

RANDY TRAVIS

"I cook for fun now, but there was a time had to cook to keep a roof over my hea

Country singing star Randy Travis is intensely private person. When he's the road performing, he raises and tr horses on a ranch outside Nashville, Tennessee. One of his favorites is a palomino whose grandfather was no than Roy Rogers's famed steed, Trig

Friends and family are always dropp the ranch, and with true Southern hospitality, everyone stays for dinne

super-model Elle Macpherson, and the great Jerry Lewis. We know you're dying to find out what Jerry likes to eat.

If your starving for a feast or just want a late-night snack, this interactive multimedia cookbook is filled with what you've been craving.

THE LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS COOKBOOK
IBM $21.97
COMPTON'S NEWMEDIA (310) 473-4147

THE CROSS COUNTRY TREK

Whether you're just hitting the road with some friends or travelling cross-country on business, Compton's New Media's *The AAA Trip Planner* can definitely come in handy. If you like things all laid out for you, then this is just the disc to get.

The AAA Trip Planner lets you select the quickest route between two places, it helps you choose hotels, based on AAA diamond ratings, and it even recommends restaurants and tourist attractions in the area. There's over 34,000 hotels, motels, and dining facilities listed. Whether

TAKING THE FUN OUT OF ROAD TRIPS.

you're going cross-country or just cross-county, you'll be convinced that *The AAA Trip Planner* is the domestic travel agent you've been looking for.

THE AAA TRIP PLANNER
IBM $32.97
COMPTON'S NEWMEDIA
(310) 473-4147

CHAMPAGNE WISHES, EVERYONE!

THERE'S NOTHING CUTER THAN MICE.

THE REMOTEPOINT.

DESIGNER MICE

If you're tired of your dull, boring mouse, and are looking for something a little slicker, check out the new Logitech MouseMan Sensa. Designed by a team of Italian designers known for their work with high-profile consumer products, the MouseMan Sensa is destined to add a personal touch to your workspace. The product is available in four distinctive patterns, each of which has a strong appeal and highly sophisticated, enduring design. Along with the pattern and color, these babies come in two different surface textures. Two of the patterns, called Deep Wood and Black Chess have a high-gloss texture, while the Silver Pearl and Blue Leopard models are velvety to the touch. I bet you can't wait to get your hands on these critters.

It's time to lose the grey and pick up the gloss. The MouseMan Sensa are definitely the mice to own.

THE MOUSEMAN SENSA
IBM $64.95 & $79.95
LOGITECH INC.
(510) 795-8500

LOOK MOM, NO CORD!

Here's a type of mouse that you don't come across that often: The Interlink cordless hand-held mouse, better known as the RemotePoint. This product gives users the freedom to sit back from the desk and enjoy all new multimedia software in comfort. It also allows you to get up from the desk entirely and deliver computer-driven presentations with ease. With its elegant teardrop shape, extended battery life, and cordless 40-foot range, The RemotePoint is perfect for sales and advertising presentations, corporate reporting, business training and trade show conventions. Actually, it's ideal for any situation where personal computers are used to present and display information. Interlink looks like it's definitely pointing to the future.

THE REMOTEPOINT
MAC/IBM $199.95
INTERLINK ELECTRONICS
(805) 484-1331

ROM POWER TOOLS

If you're are looking for the ultimate in joysticks, the Phoenix, the Rolls Royce of the industry, is the one to get. It's by far the biggest and baddest fully programmable control console. Clear off your desktop, you're going to need some room for this puppy. The Phoenix flight and weapons control system incorporates 24 programmable buttons, throttle and rudder control, and a PC analog joystick, all in one single ergonomic unit. Each button can be programmed to act as a joystick button or keyboard command. It's also compatible with virtually all flight programs and has pre-configured control settings for the most popular games.

Designed by Advanced Gravis, the Phoenix is the mother of all joysticks.

THEY DON'T GET MUCH BIGGER THAN THIS.

PHOENIX
IBM $149.95
ADVANCED GRAVIS
(604) 431-5020

THE ULTIMATE IN DRIVING AND FLYING.

FLY BABY FLY
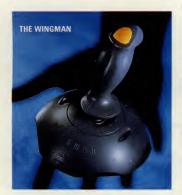
If you're into flying and driving experiences that are as authentic as possible, you'll definitely want to pick up the new Pro Pedals by CH Products. These long-awaited rudder pedals are unique because they're currently the only pedals featuring dual operating modes for use with flying and driving games. Pro Pedals feature forward and back rudder motion and aircraft-style toe brakes to enhance flying games, and an independent-pivot movement-accelerator and brake-control to provide realism for driving games. Designed to withstand even the toughest gamer, the Pro Pedals have an anti-skid base with extra large rubber feet for smooth surfaces and spikes for carpeted floors. You can step on them, jump on them, even throw them through your bedroom window and they'll still have you driving like Jackie Stewart.

If you're the ultimate gamer, you need the Pro Pedals.

PRO PEDALS
IBM $139.95
CH PRODUCTS (619) 598-2518

GET A GRIP

Looking for a good, sturdy joystick? Something not too small, not too light and not too weak? A joystick that looks great on your desk and plays even better? Well, Logitech has designed two new joysticks that should be your next purchase, the WingMan and the WingMan Extreme. They feature gripping ergonomics, quality workmanship and a radical new look that would seem at home in any Stealth Bomber, the two joysticks will invade major retail outlets by the fall and sell for $39.95 and $69.95 respectively. Some of the distinguishing features include rubberized buttons and a much heavier base that provides greater stability and control over advanced flight maneuvers such as extremely radical turns, barrel-rolls, hard dives and climbs.

The standard WingMan has a trigger and thumb switch and a throttle control built into the base. It supports all existing two-button, throttle-control PC flight-simulation games.

The high performance WingMan Extreme flies all high-end, Thrustmaster-compatible simulations. It has extra palm support for hours of fatigue-free flying, and a four-way view switch on the handle that provides the pilot with immediate "around-the-clock view" of any angle of the cockpit. It also has three additional thumb buttons that are available for quick-witted weapons-control, target switching, and special weapons. Lock and load. Ready, aim and FIRE!

THE WINGMAN
AND THE
WINGMAN
EXTREME
IBM $39.95
AND $69.95
LOGITECH
(510) 795-
8500

THE WINGMAN

THE WINGMAN EXTREME

MAKING COMPUTING FUN

It's a known fact, children have virtually no patience, especially when it comes to doing homework. And trying to get a child to work on a computer is nearly impossible. But if perhaps a child was lured to a computer, then maybe they'd spend some time at it. That's where BrainWorks comes in. BrainWorks was founded in 1993 with a vision to revolutionize the computing experience for young people by creating and marketing personal computer hardware products that could transform the basic PC into a personalized workstation. Using classic themes, such as *Star Trek*, *The Flintstones*, and Nickelodeon, BrainWorks kits transform the traditional generic PC into a sleek, colorful playstation that kids can claim as their own. To top it off, the product will hit the streets this winter, just in time for the holidays.

Each kit includes five items: a fully functional keyboard, a highly evolved mouse, a mousepad made to last, a multi-disk holder, and a monitor mask. Whether your child likes to beam aboard the Starship Enterprise, travel to Bedrock with Fred Flintstone, or step into the wacky world of Nickelodeon, BrainWorks successfully transforms a child's computer experience by merging the world of learning and the world of imagination in a way you've never seen before.

STAR TREK, THE FLINTSTONES, NICKELODEON SCREEN COVERS
IBM $129.95
BRAINWORKS (516) 625-7000

ROLL WITH IT!

Rated the best trackball on the market by the *New York Times*, CH Products' Trackball Pro is the perfect alternative to the traditional mouse. With a versatile four-button design that offers maximum click and click-lock functions, the Trackball Pro is an easy-to-use rollerball for either right- or left-handed users. The large ball enables you to accelerate across the screen and zero in on a precise point with the greatest of ease. Well suited for mouse-based applications such as Microsoft Windows, it's available for IBM PC, Macintosh, Sun, Amiga and Access bus-equipped computers. And it's Pentium-compatible as well.

TRACKBALL PRO
MAC/IBM $129.95
CH PRODUCTS (619) 598-2518

PC PROPAD

If you're in the market to buy a new control pad for your gaming pleasures, you might want to check out the new PC Propad by STD Entertainment. This lightweight, easy-to-handle gaming pad comes equipped with 8-directional digital output, two auto-fire speed selections, semi and hands-free turbo-fire, and independent auto-fire control. The PC Propad is available for IBM PC, XT/AT, 386 and 486 compatible.

PC PROPAD
IBM $19.95
STD
ENTERTAINMENT
(410) 785-5661

A Condensed History

By Mikki Halpin

Bringing science to a popular audience has always been a tricky business. Those involved must walk a fine line between losing themselves in abstruse theories which will sail right over the heads of the average channel-surfer, or trivializing important ideas in order to make them palatable. Despite these perils, in recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in scientific theory, with books like Stephen Jay Gould's *Burgess Shale*, and a biography of eccentric genius Nikola Tesla enjoying great popularity. None, however, has caught the popular imagination like Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time,* which not only hit the New York Times bestseller list, but was also made into a film. Now Hawking's work, which covers concepts ranging from black holes to a reworking of the Newtonian theory of relativity, has come to CD-ROM.
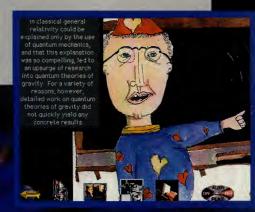
Hawking, who now holds Newton's former position as Lucasian Professor at Cambridge University, has become an iconic figure in the public imagination. Confined to a wheelchair since a diagnosis of Lou Gehrig's disease thirty years ago (when he was given only two years to live), and speaking through a computerized voicebox, Hawking seems almost like a proto-Data, a man whose brain exceeds the faulty equipment nature has given him, and who has turned to machines to sustain and stimulate that brain. Hawking is a forceful, inescapable presence throughout the CD-ROM, narrating each section, and hovering at the edge of every screen, ready to take you to another idea about the nature of the universe. Recently, I was able to spend an afternoon with Robit Hairman and Jim Mervis, creators of *A Brief History of Time,* for Crunch Media in association with Scientific American, and now partners in a new development company, Expanded Studios.

When asked how involved Hawking was in the project, Mervis replies: "Stephen was very involved. When we originally approached him about the project, back in March of '93, he consented to a meeting only. We showed him a demo in May of that year, he liked it and said go ahead. He then posed a few problems for us, one of which was that he would only go forward if one of his former assistants would consent to work with us on it. He didn't really want to spare the time himself, because he wanted to devote time to additional research. We got his former assistant into the loop, but it turned out that his former assistant didn't
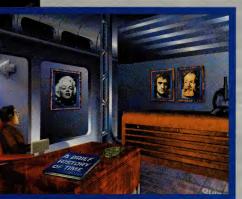
The effect of free fall can be demonstrated by imagining Einstein playing Ping Pong in a tram at the edge of a cliff

in classical general relativity could be explained only by the use of quantum mechanics, and that this explanation was so compelling, led to an upsurge of research into quantum theories of gravity. For a variety of reasons, however, detailed work on quantum theories of gravity did not quickly yield any concrete results

# of Expanded Studios

have a lot of time either, so in the end Stephen took part a great deal [in the process]." Robit adds, "We would take him demos, and then he'd go through and make comments. We did that four or five times. Then he and his current assistant went through every screen, which took a week, and made a few comments." "Most of which involved wanting to rewrite the book!" Jim cracks.

The production involved about ten people, and, Jim explains, the point was to get across an idea with as much humor and as simply as possible. "Our guiding metaphor in the design phase was to walk a tightrope between *Nova* and *Monty Python.*"

Robit concurs. "It's been our feeling all along that the barrier between people and physics is mostly about fear or intimidation. People think 'Oh this is all so complicated.' Stephen Hawking's motivation in writing the book was so the average person on the street could understand cosmology and we wanted to further that goal. And Stephen had this brilliant economy of language, which his condition partially dictates,

so we had to come up with ways that would deliver the ideas and be fun to play with. We just tried to make physics seem as ordinary as possible, which it is. The only reason we have difficulty with that idea is because we are brought up in a Newtonian paradigm where we think of gravity as a force at the center of the earth. If we had been taught these ideas [the ones in the ROM] from birth we'd think it was as natural as eating spaghetti."

The partners point out that Hawking has been involved in post-production and marketing as well, doing an interview with David Frost for British television and giving the keynote speech at MacWorld in August. For a wild moment I thought they were going to suggest *I* talk to him, but that dream was quickly shattered. Trying to seem profound, I mention that I love the history section of the disc, in which Hawking lovingly profiles Einstein and Galileo, tracing an intellectual tradition and placing himself in it. Robit, as he always does when discussing the disc, suddenly becomes very animated.

"We're going to do an Einstein disc. I love the concepts, like The Uncertainty Principle. I love the non-physics implications of that, The Myth of Objectivity and so forth. Entropy, the idea of it blows me away. There was this entropy section,

A well-known scientist once gave a public lecture on astronomy. He described how the earth orbits around the sun and how the sun, in turn, orbits around the center of a vast collection of stars called our galaxy. At the end of the lecture, a little old lady at the back of the room got up and said: "What you have told us is rubbish. The world is really a flat plate supported on the back of a giant tortoise." The scientist gave a superior smile before replying, "What is the tortoise standing on?" "You're very clever young man, very clever, " said the old lady. "But it's turtles all the way down!"

Stephen Hawking,
A Brief History of Time

which Stephen thought was excessive, so we hid it away in a corner. Ironically, when we were optimizing the disc, this entropy section actually caused a great deal of entropy!"

Entropy aside, the production process seems to have been remarkably free of technical hurdles. After doing some early experiments with navigables, they discarded the idea of using QuickTime VR. Robit explains: "It just seemed unnecessary. This title isn't about navigation.

Our Picture of the Universe

This is more about the whys rather than how to get there." Jim adds that there were also "real estate" questions, pointing out that *A Brief History of Time* uses up all but 2MB of the CD-ROM.
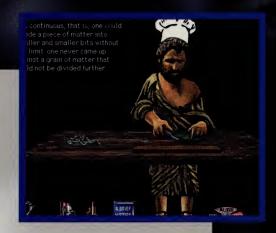
The only other major technical issue was the switch to development software that is notoriously unfriendly to text. As it turns out, text was low on Mervis and Hairman's list too. Both men sneer a little at the idea of an "Expanded Book", or multimedia titles which are still wedded to the notion of the page. They point out that though the entire text of the book is embedded in the ROM, one can organically pass through every concept and idea without turning to that

section. Everything is presented in mixed media format of animations, narrations, and exploratory environments. Jim Mervis says "What we want to avoid is just another, perhaps faster, way to get through a book. Or a book with little moving illustrations. Do you really believe that people want to read books on their computers or PowerBooks?" They both point out that relaxing with a book is different from sitting at your computer, a passive vs. an active situation. Mervis adds "And I hate taking my mouse into the bathroom."

Mervis and Hairman are currently deep in production for their next title, as yet unnamed, but based on *The Language of the Genes* by Stephen Jones, who is the Director of the Galton Lab for Genetic Research at University College, London. Describing the project, Jim says "It's a wonderful book, because it has a very informed attitude about genetics and the possibilities for genetic therapy. It's tempered with an understanding of the history of the use and abuse of genetics in the eugenic movements of the early twentieth century, which culminated in the Final Solution. On the other hand, Steve is a prominent geneticist and he understands and shows the very real potential that genetic research has for our benefit.

Hmm. Two titles, two books. Two British scientists named Stephen. Is a pattern emerging? Though Expanded Studios has several other science titles in development, they are also at work on a game called *Ceremony City,* based on a rock opera Hairman wrote some years ago. *Ceremony City* has its geeky side too though, as it employs an AI (artificial intelligence) element in its programming. Both men point out that their concept of science is broad, includ-

ing even music and architecture, and that they always factor a sense of play and humor into their titles. *A Brief History of Time,* for example, illustrates the theory of relativity by showing Hawking, Einstein, and Newton flashing light at one another with mirrors. The genetics title includes a section called "The Mating Game" in which you get to pair off selected men and women, which the computer obligingly morphs for you to see what the offspring would look like.
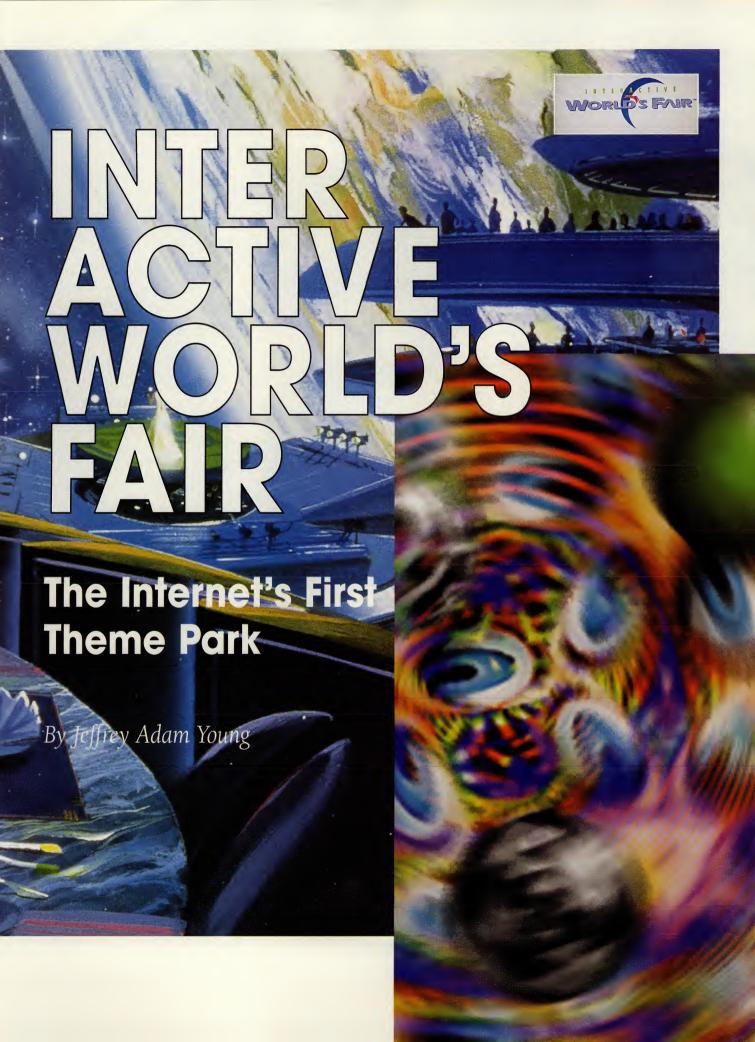
Of the humor in *Time* Robit says, "It's a fun disc. The idea is stealth education. You don't put the disc in and think, 'I'm studying now.' We want people to enjoy themselves with these wacky ideas which actually exist. They don't have to go in with the idea of understanding physics."

They point out that multimedia is still nascent. "I thought last year that we were in the Charlie Chaplin phase.... Now we're in the talkie stage. So much of what we are doing is accommodating to these primitive tools. It's an evolving medium, but it has incredible potential." Expanded Studios is dedicated to pushing that potential to its furthest possibility.

Imagine. You walk through the turnstiles of a World's Fair and strap a jet-pack onto your back. The next moment you're airborne with a bird's-eye-view of an expansive fairground. You focus on your destination, the Planet Earth Dome, and a moment later you land outside a breathtaking architectural monstrosity unrivaled in size and in the perfection of its design. As you stroll into the foyer of the dome, you see a free-floating, 50-foot-high replica of Earth with your home city facing you, complete with cloud formations according to the weather at that very moment. Your pager goes off. It's your friend, Sam, whom you've never met in person, but only spoken to several times in Cyberspace. He requests your presence at one of the pubs on the other side of the park. Instead of turning into the Rocketeer again, you opt to travel via the trans-porters, known around the Fair as lightspeed termi-nals. Seconds later when you arrive, you notice Sam's 3-D representation of himself looks a bit sal-low, so you inquire about his health....

INTER ACTIVE WORLD'S FAIR

The Internet's First Theme Park

By Jeffrey Adam Young

Now stop imagining, because all of these experiences will become reality by the end of this year. Knowledge Adventure Worlds and Landmark Entertainment are developing the first mass-marketed attraction on the information superhighway, the Interactive World's Fair.

What the Interactive World's Fair most closely resembles is an online service like America Online or CompuServe, only they've taken all of the windows and pull-down menus and tossed them out. What they've replaced them with is quite extraordinary; a completely navigable 3-D environment where you'll meet other people and explore the vast knowledge of the internet, presented in a completely understandable and highly accessible fashion.

One word recently introduced into our language and many others in the Western world is "Internet." Unfortunately, these three syllables strike fear into the hearts of many of us who find the term a bit nebulous. One of the goals of the Interactive World's Fair is to harness the power of the wild bronco named Internet. It's not an easy task, but somebody had to do it.

Dave Gobel is the President of KA Worlds, a spinoff of Knowledge Adventure, the successful software company he co-founded. Gobel calls the Interactive World's Fair "the first destination on the superhighway. It answers the question of why you go onto a network."

"Unlike most CD-ROMs, which are a solitary experience," Gobel continues, "World's Fair is a social experience that makes use of the multimedia elements (such as graphics and sound) that are available on a CD-ROM."

The Interactive World's Fair start-up kit comes on CD-ROM and combines new and existing technologies in an innovative new way. It places the memory-intensive stuff, like graphics and sounds, onto the disc, and the transitive stuff, like where other people are, comes from data via a regular phone line. With a Mac or PC, a CD-ROM drive and a modem, you have all the hardware you need to buy your ticket to the World's Fair. According to KA Worlds' vice-president of sales and marketing, Greg Beasley, "the CD-ROM will be priced very competitively, for around the cost of a couple of

CONCEPTUAL ART FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT AREA

movie tickets," and the disc will come with free 'usage credit,' which is the admission fare once you're online. Following the theme park model, "You'll be able to buy half-day or full-day tickets," as opposed to the way many online systems tally up and charge you for every minute spent online. And since the IWF is accessible through the Internet, any existing Internet connection you have will work. Alternatively, the CD-ROM will have software on it to determine your most cost-effective hook-up to the internet. One of the most popular Internet connections is via a company called NetCom which charges around $19.00 per month.

One way KA Worlds plans to keep prices to a minimum is by offering corporate sponsorship of pavilions within the IWF. What's this? Commercials in cyberspace?

According to Beasley these are "Low-key sponsorships." Not in-your-face advertising. But "corporations can contribute content if it's not horrendously commercial."

"Corporations will be encouraged to sponsor a topic that is associated with their business. It will be user's choice to access the advertisements," says Anthony Esparza, VP of Creative Development, Landmark Entertainment. "For instance, you could be watching a demonstration of how robots build cars, and if you click on a poster of a Ford Bronco in the distance, then the car appears and you can climb aboard and test-drive it—on the moon, if you so desire."

This type of voluntary advertising is very different from the forced ads of television and radio, but there seems to be faith in the method. KA Worlds has signed on three high-profile agencies as consultants, Ketchum Interactive, BBDO Worldwide and Ogilvy and Mather, to help develop consumer marketing plans and develop advertising models. If they can't pull it off, then no-one can.

According to Gobel, "Certain areas of the IWF are free. These are the common areas. There will also be pay-per-event activities, a performance at the Skyway Comedy Club, for instance."

So how will all of this appear to you? As you scoot your mouse, you walk along in a roller-skating motion and the three-dimensional world moves around you. This proprietary technology is called Zoomscape. Locomotion through the Fair is made possible by this strolling motion as well as by teleporting, clicking on an object in distance on an overview map, or jet-packing. Once airborne you'll see an overview of the IWF, and the different areas will make themselves evident "in the same way that, in Bugs Bunny cartoons, if a character's in space and looks back at Earth, he'll see the letters F-L-O-R-I-D-A over that state," comments Esparza.

Other inherent technologies in the IWF include KA Worlds' Lifeforms. Lifeforms are fully articulated 3-D characters that move fluidly. For example, when one raises its right arm, the weight of the entire body shifts to compensate. These Lifeforms serve as your online identity, and they can be customized to resemble your true form. You will even be able to send in a picture of yourself and have that photo transferred to the head of your "avatar" or onscreen identity. The Lifeforms technology was originally developed at the Simon Frazier University as a program that displayed choreographed movements of dance routines.

Along with Lifeforms and Zoomscape, there is the important communications link technology, also designed by KA Worlds known as the World Server. The World Server is a modem connection via Internet that enables thousands of people to connect at once.

All of these technologies were tested in a project in association with Steven Spielberg and the Starbright Foundation. In this project, KA Worlds networked computers at children's hospitals so that seriously-ill kids could interact socially, play games, explore their environment, and talk with family members who live far away. Gobel cites television as IWF's main competition, not other online systems. However, television's economic model enables consumers to enjoy it free of charge, while advertisers foot the bill. This could be the economic model in the future for IWF, but that's a few years down the road.

The potential scope of IWF is enormous. According to

A PRELIMINARY SKETCH OF THE GAMES PAVILLION

Beasley, "the movie business is a $6 billion-a-year industry, while the Telephone business is five to ten times that. In movies the content is already created, but on the telephone, people creating the content as they go." IWF provides a bit of both. Each pavilion has a heavy emphasis on socially interactive 3-D chat-rooms, where your avatars can converse with a group of others. By the end of 1996, KA Worlds estimates that over 500,000 customers will have visited the IWF.

Landmark Entertainment is the top theme park development firm, second only to Disney. As traditional theme park developers, they decided to channel their efforts toward developing a virtual theme park. The IWF is a direct result of that goal. The name "World's Fair" is derivative of the KA Worlds name and not intended to represent the traditional notion of a real-life World's Fair. Instead, the IWF is part online system, part EPCOT center.

"The limits of traditional design are gone, in that normal physical constraints no longer apply, and real estate is no longer an issue," comments Landmark's Esparza. "Also, conceptual things are possible that aren't in a real park—you can have NASA's Mission Control in one room and a true-to-life rocket to explore in the next, and a walk on Mars in the next room." Landmark is responsible for the master-planning and entertainment programming in the IWF, while KA Worlds spearheads the technology creation, packaging and product distribution.

Some things that Esparza has to consider when master-planning include creating fictional worlds that meet people's expectations. "If we were re-creating Ancient Rome, it would be part *Ben Hur* and part *Cleopatra,* not a true simulation in which there would be an interesting building every mile or so. We'd take that approach in a real-world theme park, and we take that approach here(with IWF)."

Other problems to think out include sponsorship in relation to virtual real estate. "When you sponsor something in cyberspace you can sponsor a door, (like a Hollywood facade) but behind that door could be the biggest project of the entire park. So it's not real estate you're sponsoring here, it's content. For the sake of consistency, the IWF buildings that are bigger on the outside are actually larger in the internal area."

The first area being created by Landmark is the Science and Technology area, which will contain six main pavilions. This demo is expected to be in early testing by summertime this year.

Once you enter the Science and technology area you can check out all of the pavilions by way of a monorail-like future cruiser that gives an overview tour of the pavilions. You'll see the Biospace pavilion, which focuses on biology, genetics and medicine. Feast your eyes on the Cyberspace pavilion, which will focus on computer technology. Travel through time in the Timespace pavilion or just grab a cold one at Club Starview, the social gathering-place for the Science and Tech area.

Other future areas will include Arts and Entertainment, Sports and Business and Commerce.

One cool trick that IWF employs to hide the burden of annoying download time is that downloading can happen in the background. In other words, if you click on an area that requires the program to download additional art or information, you won't see one of those frightful thermometers appear. Instead you'll get a message instructing you to return in five minutes for "the next showing."

"There are no lines at the Interactive World's Fair," notes Esparza.

When Esparza says this he lets out a loony smile, reminis-

cent of Gene Wilder's Willy Wonka. At that moment, I know that the IWF will be successful.

THE CYBERSPIRE IS THE IWF'S EQUIVALENT OF THE SPACE NEEDLE

With a great deal of work still ahead of them, KA Worlds and Landmark Entertainment are poised to deliver the most successful online service ever. With the technology demos I saw, and the force of creative and marketing powers that these companies are dedicating, IWF is going to be *the* computer product to watch for when it's released in the fourth quarter of '95.

MULTIMEDIA ENCYCLOPEDIA SHOOT-OUT

By Al Giovetti

Combine vast amounts of textual information with video, animations, music, sounds and human speech on a small plastic disk. Sort, collate, catalogue, and present subject data in an organized fashion, and you have today's fantastic multimedia encyclopedias, wonderful tools for student research. But there are so many of these interactive encyclopedias on the shelf that it's difficult to determine which one of them is worth your hard-earned dollars.

Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia, Encarta, Grolier's Encyclopedia, and *Infopedia* have videos, animations, sounds, pictures, research tools, articles, and maps. The comparison chart on page 31 shows how the four products differ in standard feature quality and quantity, and some unique features. Choosing a product by feature may be the way to go, as long as you keep in mind that these products are updated yearly, with old laggers frequently leapfrogging last year's market leaders.

COMPTON'S INTERACTIVE ENCYCLOPEDIA 3.0, having discounted its price by over $300 from the 1994 edition, is now priced competitively with the other three.

Compton's contains the complete text of the 26-volume print version of *Compton's Encyclopedia,* and can print pictures, maps, charts, and articles.

Compton's Tableau has a toolbar down the left side of the screen. The right half of the screen holds the full text of the selected encyclopedia article. The upper left quarter of the screen, to the right of the toolbar, displays photos, video, animations, and slide shows. The lower left screen searches by key words or phrases, Atlas, Timeline, and three special Compton's utilities: Information pilot, Topic Tree, and Explore.

The Info Pilot uses a geometric display to explore issues related to the main article. The Topic Tree presents information in a branching tree of topics and subtopics in multiple topic windows. Explore provides four graphic representations of the toolbar functions to simulate using a newsroom, playroom, spaceship, or attic for research.

The narration and small pop-up videos of Patrick Stewart, the acclaimed stage, film, and television actor, explain how to use the *Compton's* CD-ROM Encyclopedia, both through an online interactive help feature and an off-line slide show and video tour of Compton's features. A tour of the special slide show creator called "The Editing Room" is also narrated, but not by Stewart.
Compton's NewMedia Inc: (800) 826-2206

ENCARTA '95

MICROSOFT ENCARTA, like *Compton's*, is in its third year of publication, and wants to hang its hat on having the most up-to-date and hip encyclopedia, with almost 40% of its articles recently updated, including new entries for Robin Williams and Soundgarden. *Encarta* is also the only stand-alone software-based encyclopedia, with a staff of 25 editors.

Encarta's pinpointer filter searches by word, media, geography, subject, and time. Many find *Encarta's* clean, functional workspace, with pull-down menus, easy to use, but when compared with the creatively styled *Compton's* and *Groliers*, it seems plain and awkward, and using it felt like work. A convenient spellcheck feature helps you with difficult words and phrases.

Encarta is set up with an outline in the left column, a multimedia column in the middle, and the article text column on the right of the screen under the pull-down menus. Media can be set to continuous display, and a Wizard button makes finding items easier. A MindMaze game tests your knowledge, with a castle to explore and a cast of crazy characters.

Research is assisted with Notemarks to mark important items, copy to any installed word processor, print text and images, and create lists of articles and media. A dictionary and Thesaurus can help you with research and writing. And you can explore by listening and looking at words translated into over 60 languages.

Microsoft Corporation: (800) 228-6270

The Artist in the Modern Era

The history of art is a legacy styles and traditions. In the modern era, it is also a sto of new ideas and unique person visions. For Picasso, the meanin of art was to be derived fro other art, not directly fro nature. Expressionists look to bridge art and the mir of the artist. Influenced by su modern masters as Picass Kandinsky, and Miró, Hele Frankenthaler went to develop her ow

GROLIER published the first CD-ROM encyclopedia in 1986. The 1995 edition is the seventh release of the genre leader, and contains the complete text of the 21-volume *Grolier's Academic American Encyclopedia*. Rather than the

video tour seen in *Infopedia* and *Compton's*, *Grolier* provides a 25-page User's Guide tour of features.

Grolier has an 18-function toolbar, which displays as a single screen menu and a border on the top and left side of the computer screen. *Grolier* has the most sophisticated search feature of any package reviewed, combining up to four fields of multiple topics joined by logical operators, such as *not*, *and*, and *or*. *Grolier* can search on wild cards, related concepts, word proximity, timeline, and scope. "Hyperlink" is *Grolier's* hypertext of words which are the titles to other articles.

Grolier's research tools include lists of bookmarks that can be saved to disk under a custom file name. The disc will print, save, copy to, and launch installed word processors and the Windows clipboard. *Grolier's* Knowledge Tree uses two windows to explore the relationships between topics in a manner that bears a resemblance to, but is not as sophisticated as, *Compton's* topic tree.

Six famous Pathmakers from six disciplines, including Buzz Aldrin, give their views in all-too-short videos, and other presentations encourage exploration. New themed fact boxes show a topic on the left, a picture in the center and a series of facts on the right.

Grolier's timeline is one of the most extensive of those viewed, with a newly-added textual list of significant dates. It suffers from the lack of a dictionary or other reference works, but has some really unique and interesting features, such as multimedia maps.

Grolier Electronic Publishing Inc. (800)285-4534

INFOPEDIA
The Ultimate Multimedia Reference Tool.

Index
Choose Index to access INFOPEDIA's articles from an alphabetical list.

Subject
Choose Subject to explore INFOPEDIA's categories.

Gallery
Choose Gallery to view the amazing multimedia of INFOPEDIA.

Search
Choose Search to quickly find specific words or articles.

Tour Guide
Choose Tour Guide to learn how to use INFOPEDIA's features.

INFOPEDIA is the new entry in the competition for your multimedia encyclopedia dollars. *Infopedia* is unique in that it has the full text of eight reference works, including the 29-volume *Funk & Wagnall's Encyclopedia*. *Infopedia* has chosen to enumerate in its advertising all 200,000 "entries" in all eight books when comparing its product to the others.

Infopedia has an average amount of video and animations, but was left in the dust where pictures are concerned. While encyclopedia "articles" are significantly longer than dictionary entries, and are hardly comparable, it's a very significant feature to have all eight reference works in one location. Hypertext links each and every word and reference to each of the eight books, giving instant cross-referenced information from a variety of perspectives. The Project

MULTIMEDIA ENCYCLOPEDIA COMPARISON CHART

FEATURE	COMPTON'S	ENCARTA	GROLIER	INFOPEDIA
Animations	11	100	30	90
Articles	35000	26000	33000	36000
Dictionary	all	all	none	all
Maps	136	800	336	A 238
Pictures	8000	8000	8000	1800
Slide Shows	48	NA	NA	NA
Sound (hours)	15 hours	8 hours	6 hours	6 hours
Timeline	2	1	1	none
Retail Price	NA	$100	$149	$90
Video	100	NA	50	60 (45)
Update Price	$50	$55	B NA	NA
Street Price	$70-90	NA	$100	NA
Print Version	$99	none	NA	NA

A=11 multimedia maps, B=net of $45 rebate coupon, NA=not available or applicable, (#) counted

function allows you to make entries and gather them together in a subject folder.

While *Infopedia* shines in the volume of its printed media, it significantly falls behind in its interface and multimedia features in almost every one of our chart categories. *Infopedia*'s interface effectively turns off the "switch to" feature of Windows, making it very difficult to switch back and forth between the word processor and the reference materials in Windows. I did find a back door out of the program with "save project," which uses a standard dialog box.
Future Vision Multimedia Inc: (404) 458.0553

Each of the products reviewed is a leader in its own right. *Infopedia* shines in the volume of its cross-referenced entries from eight publications. *Grolier* was clearly superior in research, average in multimedia, deficient in hypertext dictionary reference, and the Pathmakers, while an excellent feature, could have been better. *Compton's* has a clear, balanced design with the most substantial multimedia features. *Encarta* had a vast number of Windows features but seemed not greatly different, save in its Spartan but functional appearance.

Today, computers are limited to the interactive presentation of sights and sounds, but someday multimedia reports will be prepared by and presented to grade school students. For now, we must be satisfied with the limited functions of the present, which, compared to the alternative, are a remarkable step forward. Most of all, grade and high school children love these encyclopedias, which make them a must-have for anyone who is young—or just young at heart.

INTERA

By Marianne Cotter

When Interactive Arts (IA) began production last summer on its first commercial CD-ROM program *An Olympic Journey*, the team had their work cut out for them. The Amateur Athletic Association in Los Angeles, which is sponsoring the project along with the International Olympic Committee, opened their archives, a treasure chest of photos, medals, tickets, programs, videos, and memorabilia of all kinds that have been collected from the Olympic Games since they entered the modern era in 1896. An enormous amount of statistics and other research materials were also provided to give *An Olympic Journey* its immense depth of content.

The object of the program is to highlight the participation of women in the Olympic games, focusing on the careers of 40 female athletes while providing an historical overview of the games and their host cities. "We collected an unbelievable amount of material," says creative director Mary Jo Reutter, who had an assistant do nothing but scan Olympic images for three full months. "We knew which athletes we were dealing with so we didn't have to scan everything, but each image had to be scanned at a fairly high resolution (which takes a great deal of time) because we didn't know exactly how we were going to use it." In the end, the library of scanned images filled two hard drives plus four CD-ROM discs. By that time Reutter and producer David Schwartz were deeply engrossed in a plan to shape four interactive pathways along which the images would be artfully scattered in a journey of discovery for the viewer.

An Olympic Journey is the kind of high-end, content-rich, culturally-oriented program upon which Interactive Arts has built a reputation for quality programming. Interactive Arts laid its foundation in the galleries of some of Southern California's most prestigious museums. One of IA's first contracts when it opened in 1988 was with the J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu. "They

CTIVE ARTS

wanted an interactive kiosk placed in one of their galleries to educate visitors about illuminated manuscripts," says IA's founder and president Peter Bloch. "Our interactive program allowed visitors to "browse" through the pages of a 13th-Century illuminated manuscript, view enlarged details, and see, step-by-step, how an illuminated manuscript was created." Although produced in the infancy of interactive programming, *Illuminated Manuscripts* is a study in simplicity, beauty, and functionality that has garnered numerous awards, including an AVC Gold Cindy for outstanding achievement in communications. *Illuminated Manuscripts* is still in use today.

Other museums subsequently turned to Interactive Arts for their interactive installations. The San Diego Museum of Man is host to IA's *The Human Life Cycle* and IA just recently completed a very ambitious interactive installation for the California Museum of Science and Industry called *Our Urban Environment*, to educate citizens about environmental issues connected to their everyday lives. In 1992 IA completed *High Jump Clinic* for the Amateur Athletic Foundation (AAF). This project marked the beginnings of a relationship with the AAF that would eventually give rise to *An Olympic Journey*.

An Olympic Journey is a turning point for Interactive Arts, a transition from client-based work into publishing for a rapidly-maturing consumer market. Peter Bloch, an elfish Brit with a passion for new media, left a filmmaking career to pursue interactive programming in the early '80s, long before a market had even emerged. He has followed the industry through its many false starts and dead ends, creating programming for VH-D and CD-i formats before CD-ROM became the format of choice. "Now is the time to get into publishing," says Bloch. "There is a sufficiently large installed base of CD-ROMs in homes and schools to justify—and just barely justify—creating product. Only the game market right now can

Perseverance
1916 — 1928

stop   pause

EGINS

The Women's Games

Olympic Rings

Olympic Winter Games

Ye OLYMPIADE

PRELIMINARY ARTWORK FOR
AN OLYMPIC JOURNEY

PETER

MARY JO

DAVID

1984 LOS ANGELES

sustain high-budget programming. **Some statistics are now showing that the market for content-rich programs is larger than that for games. If that is not the case today, it certainly will be soon."**

Interactive Arts occupies a cozy, but unorthodox, office space on the property of Santa Monica Airport, a private facility in the not-exactly-fashionable southeast corner of an otherwise very trendy city. The building, an old, one-story former W.W.II barracks, looks out on the runway where small, brightly painted planes taxi by. Although the office is plagued by periodic power outages when too many computers are up at once, the staff, all five of them, are happy here.

Like the rest of the multimedia community, the staff at Interactive Arts anxiously awaits advances in technology like full-screen video and a common platform that will elevate the quality of the interactive experience. **"Filmmaking in a sieve," is how producer David Schwartz describes the challenges of producing quality multimedia.** "We're always faced with having to deal with the current tools that are available. You've got this great video, but you can't deliver it. You have to design backwards for machines that are not state-of-the-art. We can deliver a beautiful video at seven million colors, but most machines can only handle 256 colors. So they get a choppy video."

Thinking ahead, Interactive Arts stores several versions, including full-screen videos, of all its programs for the day when the technological planets align more agreeably. While *An Olympic Journey*, due for release in spring of 1995, is shaping up nicely to fill its market niche, the staff at Interactive Arts looks forward to seeing *An Olympic Journey*, *2nd Edition*, with full-screen video, before the next generation of speed skaters take to the ice.

MAPPING THE WORLD

ON CD-ROM

What is the proper domain of an atlas? The world, right? Most print atlases encompass the world by means of cartography. Yes, maps; maps that depict continents and countries, counties and cities; maps that detail geographic features, natural resources, climate variations, and population demographics; maps with longitude and latitude grids, the international date line, and elevation extremes. Just add state and national flags, a column of data and a few charts and graphs to bring it all into perspective and you have achieved traditional atlas fare.

**ONE TRIBE:
A CULTURAL
EXPLORATION**

What does the CD-ROM atlas offer that print atlases don't? The availability of extensive databases, videos, stills, graphics, music, and audio promise a depth of experience that would shame the most stately bound tome. But how do these costly silver disks stack up? Are they practical when it comes to accessing useful information about a specific place? And how do you choose from the plethora of electronic atlases on the market today?

One Tribe: An Interactive Encyclopedia of People and Cultures (Virgin Sound and Vision, (714) 833-1999) leads the pack in terms of providing information in a rich, evocative, if not downright distracting, multimedia experience. The controlling

BY MARIANNE COTTER

idea in *One Tribe* is multiculturalism with an emphasis on indigenous cultures. The interface is a living room in which your blonde British host narrates a slide show from a comfortable sofa. You can interrupt her at any time to click on the multiple objects in the room, like the book which indexes countries by name. The globes open to a world map with a zoom control to isolate countries and regions.

One Tribe has achieved excellent artistic continuity and moves seamlessly through the pathways, using visual fade-ins and fade-outs to great effect. *One Tribe*, unfortunately, has no Print or Download options, limiting its usefulness as a reference source. I would be reluctant to sit a child down in front of this program to complete a report for fear he would get lost in the rich multicultural odyssey. Ultimately, *One Tribe*, which is also available in a scaled-down and more atlas-focused version called *One World*, succeeds as a high-end edutainment product rather than as a hard-core reference source.

For a more information-intensive program, try *CNN Newsroom: Global View* (Compact Publishing, (800) 964-1518). The interface is a television newsroom with six monitors containing CNN news videos of political hot-spots plus a series of world clocks. Another monitor has a globe that accesses the atlas. Zoom in on the large world map to isolate a particular continent or country. Extensive databases and substantial articles are accessed through four icons in the corner: people, resources, politics and military.

THE WORLD IN A LIVING ROOM

The emphasis in this program is on current events, supported by the information needed to make sense of the news. Seven different types of chart can be customized with selected data from selected coun-

tries, which, along with Print and Download features, offer considerable flexibility to the user. *CNN Newsroom* constitutes an excellent choice for students and professionals alike.

National Geographic's Picture Atlas of the World (National Geographic Society, (800) 368-2728) is a fairly sound general reference title. Developed for educational use, the icon functions are clear, taking you to text, slides, vital statistics, and an index for a list of place names. Clip and Print functions allow maps and text to find their way easily into a word processing program. While the aesthetics are somewhat bland, they don't distract from the basic purpose of gathering information.

When considering multimedia atlases, don't overlook the many reference programs that have atlas components. *Microsoft Bookshelf* (Microsoft, (800) 426-9400), with the Hammond Intermediate World Atlas, is a study in accessibility. Once the CD-ROM is loaded, a toolbar is perched at the top of the Program Manager window which, when clicked on, takes you immediately to a set of seven reference books, one of which is an atlas. Each map has access to related listings in the almanac and the encyclopedia. Considering the six other reference books that are included and the ability to download, *Microsoft Bookshelf* is hard to beat.

While the atlas in *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia* (Compton's New Media, (619) 929-2500) does not have relief maps, it is easily navigated and, *like Bookshelf*, provides access to related information in the encyclopedia.

While videos and other multimedia paraphernalia provide the excitement of CD-ROM atlases, it is the content and accessibility of information that determines a title's ultimate usefulness. Fortunately for the user, content-rich programs are available and well-designed multimedia features only make them better.

COMPTON'S: SOUTH AMERICA
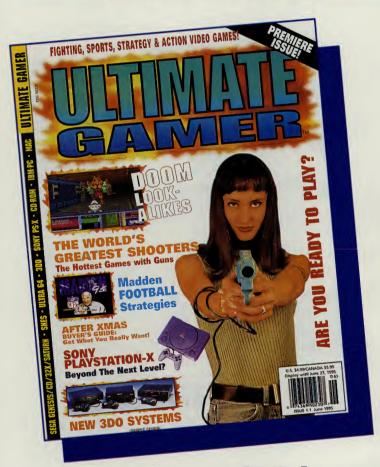
MICROSOFT BOOKSHELF: ATLAS WITHIN A REFERENCE SET

How It Works:

Our reviews are the opinions of our freelance and staff writers. Discs are rated on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest rating attainable.

TECH INFO: Important stuff you need to know about the disc, including hardware requirements, developer, publisher and price. You'll even get the flavor of the disc by finding out some of its active ingredients.

HYPERTEXT: Here you'll discover interesting tidbits related to the disc and sometimes learn crucial information that will aid in understanding the software.

SUMMARY PARAGRAPH: We pull no punches here. This is where, for better or for worse, the reviewer gives you an honest opinion of the disc in question.

RATINGS CATEGORIES:

OVERALL: This rating takes into account all the pluses and minuses of the disc. This overall rating is not a numerical average of the other ratings.

CONCEPT: Regardless of the final product, here we judge whether or not the idea for the disc is an intriguing and stimulating one.

INTERFACE: Intuitiveness of control, accessibility, ease-of-use and applicability of interface to subject matter. Is it as easy as eating with a fork, or do you need to learn a whole new utensil?

DEPTH: Number of levels, wealth of information. If we were to take a core sample of the content of the disc, this rating indicates how far we'd need to dig.

DOLLAR VALUE: How much bang you get for your buck. With ROMs running anywhere from $20 to $200, you may find this rating indispensable.

UPSIDE AND DOWNSIDE: Here, the Editors dress up in those poofy white judges' wigs and give their second opinions, which may agree or disagree with the reviewer's opinions. The Upside attempts to point out the positive aspects of a disc, while the Downside points out a disc's shortcomings. Occasionally, this section is used to rant and rave in a sarcastic manner that's of no use to anyone except our Editors, who consider it "therapy."

Chuck Jones' Peter and the

In a career spanning over 60 years, Chuck Jones, now aged 82, has to his credit four Academy Award nominations and three Oscars, several full-length animated films, and 250 Warner animated shorts, including the creation of such characters as Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck that have made him famous.

BY ALFRED C. GIOVETTI

Not to be confused with Walt Disney's *Peter and the Wolf*, this new interpretation, by animation legend Chuck Jones, of the classic 1936 Sergei Prokofiev musical story is destined to become a classic in its own right. Prokofiev originally wrote the piece to introduce children to the instruments of the orchestra, and to show how groups of instruments can be used to play parts in the telling of a story. The Chuck Jones animated short, featuring many talented actors and young musicians, is soon to be shown as a television special, and has already been released as an audio book, a 96-page, full-color, deluxe hardcover volume, and in this CD-ROM-based edutainment edition.

Selecting an icon from the main menu will take you to The Animated Tale, The Log Jam Game, Artist and Composer, or The Symphony Orchestra sections of the program. The simplistic *Frogger*-like Log Jam Game is the only part of the disc that responds to keyboard commands, by using the cursor to jump from log to log to cross the stream.

Prokofiev and Jones' 29-minute animated musical tale is divided into 33 pages which can be paged through automatically or manually. The animations are shown in custom-sized and shaped windows that appear and disappear on a black background, or a still matte background for the animated section, such as a moving mouth and eyes on a still face.

Wolf

The animated tale has professional actors performing exceptional parts in the film. Popular actress Kirstie Alley is a delightful narrator. The venerable Lloyd Bridges plays a loving grandfather, not above scolding an overactive little grandson. Child actor Ross Malinger convincingly plays Peter and he also appears in a short video introduction to the animated tale.

The Artist and Composer section has a four-minute, ¼-screen, full-motion video with speech, a short, ¼-screen, almost unreadable color text biography for Jones, and a full-screen, scrolling biography of Prokofiev. The Symphony Orchestra section presents each of the seven animated characters as well as the instruments used to represent them.

Selecting the instrument will initiate a short, 6-to-12 measure musical piece, which features either a measure-by-measure display or a full-motion video of a young artist playing the piece. Select up to ten other individual or grouped instruments to play the music to see how it sounds, and then see an encyclopedic, full-page, scrolling description of the instruments. The scrolling text advances one line at a time by depressing the left mouse button; the program does not have any facility to use the keyboard or to advance the text one page at a time.

Seven frame-per-second animated and still graphic resolution of 640-x-480 in 256 colors shows Jones' bright, distant, single-line style and the video portions with clarity and smooth animation. The CD-based digital music and human speech is wonderful, especially when played over a good wavetable card. An audio CD comes free with the program, adding value. Unfortunately, the script of the animated tale cannot be displayed with the text, to accommodate those with hearing problems or just learning to read.

PROKOFIEV'S CLASSIC MUSICAL TALE CONTINUES TO STRIKE A CHORD IN ANY FORM, EVEN THE MULTIMEDIA FORMAT, WHICH SEEMS TO BE AN IDEAL MEDIUM FOR PRESENTATION. CHUCK JONES' WORK IS DELIGHTFUL AND A WELCOME ADDITION TO THE PROJECT. IN SPITE OF THE EXCELLENT WORK OF MANY TALENTED PEOPLE, MANY CONSUMERS MAY FIND THAT THE VIDEO OF THE TV SPECIAL AND THE MAKING OF THE TV SPECIAL WILL NOT ONLY BE CHEAPER, BUT MAY DO A BETTER JOB THAN THIS MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION
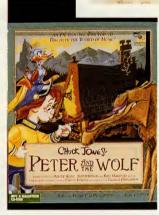
UPSIDE
BEAUTIFUL NEW ARTWORK BY CHUCK JONES

DOWNSIDE
MINIMAL INTERACTION, NOT AS ELABORATE AS LIVING BOOKS

CONCEPT 10 INTERFACE 7
DEPTH 5 DOLLAR VALUE 7

OVERALL RATINGS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Selected Math Education Internet Resources
discussion groups on USENET:
k12.ed.math
Newton telnet site: run by the Argonne National Laboratory, for the general public. Pose your question about math, and a scientist will answer it.
telnet newton.dep.anl.gov
login: cocotext
  electronic newsletter:
ECENET L, is put out by the Elementary and Early Childhood Education Department of ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center). Discusses issues related to early childhood education. Send an e-mail to:
listserv@vmd.cso.uius.edu,
leave the subject blank, and include in the message: sub ecenet-l yourfirstname yourlastname.
National Parent Information Network:
telnet prairienet.org
login: visitor
mainmenu: go eric

Math Work

BY MIKKI HALPIN

Kids are big business, but a tricky market. It's easy to entice the little ones into wanting things: they're natural born super-consumers: demanding, easily bored, always ready for something new, and always wanting what everyone else on the playground has. Trouble is, they generally don't have bank accounts, and even the ones who do have at least a modicum of parental supervision over what they spend it on. So you've got to sell to the parents too. This is the reason most kids' products, even products like bedtime stories, have some kind of lesson to them, something that makes them appear to be of moral or educational value. And this, of course, is why children's CD-

ROMS are so big. Plunk them down in front of the computer instead of the TV and automatically they're learning, right? Right. Being active instead of passive, right? Right!

Brøderbund has consistently been ahead of the curve in children's programming and they continue their winning streak with *Math Workshop*, out now for both Mac and PC. Included on the disc, in a separate application, is a "Parents' Video Guide" which gives the program an aura of academia through approving interviews with math educators. Swim through all of the interviews, and you do come to some really great stuff: suggested away-from-the-computer activities to do with your child, which also involve subliminal math education. Things like making fudge (learn measurement and frac-

tions) and some license-plate games to play in the car are probably things families do already, but others, like "Shape Detective" sound fun, at least for the K–8 demographic of this disc. They also include an internet resource guide for parents (see sidebar). The central motif of *MW* is, you guessed it, a

shop

workshop. Populated only by a helpful girl in coveralls, the different games and activities are accessed by clicking on the television, mirror and assorted paintings on the walls, or in the upstairs laboratory. Even the skylight is a hot spot, peeling back to reveal a paint program which uses geometrical shapes to form pictures. In each section, you can set the skill level to beginner, pro, or expert. The program overall is set up for multiple use, and for multiple users; it remembers each player and will keep track of your scores in each section, printing out a certificate if you wish. The activities are challenging and involving, and there's lots of animated positive reinforcement when you get something right.

The hostess, Poly Gonzales, is available in each section for help, and it's

usually necessary. Though the games rarely involve anything other then simple arithmetic, their own internal mechanisms are sometimes difficult to intuit. In the fraction workshop, you click one button to begin each problem—you are given a bar, and told to divide it into a given set of smaller bars—and click another, much larger bar marked DO IT when you are done. Without the help, most users will probably think the DO IT bar starts the cycle, rather than ending it. However, once you get into each activity, the rhythm and reinforcement shape the math experience into an enjoyable one. I particularly liked the "equivalency" section, where you are asked such surreal questions as "How many marshmallows wide is a dinner plate?" and "How many pennies does a tweezer weigh?"

BELOW: BOWLING WITH BONZO

WITH ITS CHEERY ATTITUDE AND ENGAGING ACTIVITIES, *MATH WORKSHOP* WILL PROVIDE HOURS OF PLAY. ITS MULTIPLE-USER SETUP COULD ALSO GIVE IT CLASSROOM POSSIBILITIES. CREATED BY BRODERBUND IN ASSOCIATION WITH A GROUP OF EDUCATORS, THE DISC AIMS TO, AND SUCCEEDS IN, MAKING MATH FUN AND IN INTEGRATING MATH ACTIVITIES INTO A CHILD'S EVERYDAY LIFE.

UPSIDE
VEILED LEARNING FOR A SORE SUBJECT

DOWNSIDE
JEALOUSY—MY MATH TEACHER NEVER LOOKED LIKE AN APE

CONCEPT **9** INTERFACE **7**
DEPTH **8** DOLLAR VALUE **8**

OVERALL RATINGS

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

EDUCATION

Thumbelina

Barry Manilow's musical score is carried off with outstanding acting and singing performances by Carol Channing, Charo, Gilbert Gottfried, Jodi Benson, and Gino Conforti.

BY ALFRED C. GIOVETTI

In the 1970s, Don Bluth split from Disney to produce such classic films as *The Secret of NIMH* by drawing heavily on the skills he learned working with veteran Disney animators, such as Wolfgang Reitherman, on *The Rescuers*, *The Aristocats*, and *The Jungle Book*. During the slump of Disney animation during the 1980s, Bluth continued using the quality technical skills and storytelling techniques there. Bluth's highly detailed style of ultra-realistic, hand-drawn animation combined with a fine story, precisely machined for the animated film medium, resulted in *Thumbelina*, an absolute masterpiece of modern animation skill.

Thumbelina's US release was initially dwarfed by other film releases, but it later rebounded with 3 million units in home-video sales and high worldwide box office sales. Barry Manilow's musical score is carried off with out-standing acting and singing perfor-mances by Carol Channing, Charo, Gilbert Gottfried, Jodi Benson, and Gino Conforti. Don Bluth's screenplay of the original story by Hans Christian Andersen is a faithful and enjoyable interpretation that adds just enough spice to really showcase the voice and acting talents used in the film.

The interactive book is divided into seven chapters that can be accessed independently but, alas, individual

pages cannot be marked and returned to later, as could happen if reading a book. Each of the seven chapters is divided into still scenes from the animated film. Children, and their parents and siblings, can read along with Jacquimo the swallow, portrayed by veteran voice actor Gino Conforti, either sentence by sentence or a page at a time, turning pages as required. Each page has a one-quarter-screen display surrounded by an interactive matte with hot spots. The hot spots change the cursor to different shapes to indicate the function of the hot spot. Ma Toad, played by Charo, indicates that the screen supports an activity, while Berkeley Beetle, played by Gilbert Gottfried, turns the pages of the book forward. Each interactive screen takes the player to an activity, such as painting, shapes, counting, and matching names with pictures. Successful completion of the activity is rewarded by a short animated sequence complete with voice and music from the film.

Another enjoyable part of the game is the re-creation of the production numbers from the film on the small, quarter-size screen. The lyrics also appear on the page at the same time as they're sung, making it easy to sing along with the characters.

The animation is smooth and the details are nice, but the quality can't compare to the laserdisc or videotape of the film, now available commercially. The human speech, music and sound effects come straight from the sound track of the film. Thus all the sound is of high CD-audio quality, clear and distinct.

The interface falls short in providing keyboard command equivalents to mouse commands. The activities are nothing remarkable, but are geared to ages three to eight, as supported by the program. All help and program features are supported by a speech explanation of their function, to permit even those children learning to read to enjoy the experience.

THE ADAPTATION OF THIS DELIGHTFUL FILM TO MULTIMEDIA IS SUCCESSFUL ON THE WHOLE, GIVEN THE CURRENT HARDWARE LIMITATIONS. THE FILM CONTENT IN THE GAME SHOULD APPEAL TO ALL AGES AND SEXES, DESPITE THE FACT THAT IT IS TARGETED TOWARD THE YOUNG FEMALE AUDIENCE, IN ORDER TO INCREASE THEIR COMPUTER LITERACY. THE INTERFACE IS EASY TO USE, AND THE ACTIVITIES SHOULD KEEP THE CHILDREN BUSY, BUT DON'T FORGET TO BUY THE VIDEO TO EXPERIENCE THE PRODUCT FULLY.

UPSIDE CREATES WHOLE NEW GENERATION OF *THUMBELINA* FANS

DOWNSIDE CREATES A WHOLE NEW GENERATION OF CAROL CHANNING FANS

CONCEPT 8 INTERFACE 7
DEPTH 5 DOLLAR VALUE 8

OVERALL RATINGS

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

My First I Amazing

Select a word and watch it come to life. This incredibly amazing dictionary ups the ante of educational children's titles.

BY ALEX KASTEN
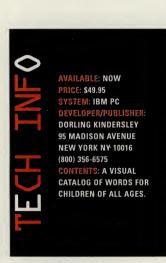
There's no question that the several Dorling Kindersley titles on the market have raised the bar for multimedia CD publishing and *My First Incredible, Amazing Dictionary* is no exception. With its lavish illustrations, rich content, and clever design, this title is not just a dictionary, but also an exploration of words and their meaning. In all, more than 1,000 words and their meanings are featured, bringing everyday words to life with a simple click of the mouse.

The main screen presents all the letters of the alphabet at the top and several navigation options running across the bottom. These options include: surprise me, backtrack, games, quick search, option, and quit. By clicking on a letter, you are presented with a picture catalog of words. When you select a picture, you pull up the definition, with sound when applicable. For every word in the dictionary, you are provided with the correct pronunciation.
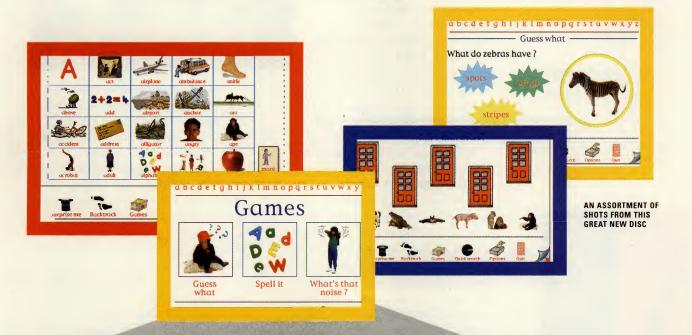
If you get bored with simply selecting letters and scrolling through definitions, you can play one of the three different games—*Guess What, Spell It,* and *What's that Noise.* All are designed to familiarize the user further with the meaning and spelling of different words. *Guess What* is a straightforward question-and-answer game, *Spell It* is a spelling bee, and *What's That Noise* is designed to help you associate the word with the sound it makes.

ncredible, Dictionary

AN ASSORTMENT OF SHOTS FROM THIS GREAT NEW DISC

If you're looking for a particular word, you can use the quick search option, which accesses an index of words by letter, much like a traditional dictionary. While using the program, all of the definitions that you accumulate are logged into the backtrack feature. By clicking on this icon, the user can go back and review the words from that session. Throughout the title, entertaining animation and friendly voices guide you through the different sections. The title also includes a surprise element. By clicking on a magician's top hat icon, a randomly selected word appears for you to learn.

This exceptional learning tool is designed for reinforcement. Through pictures, sound, and games, your child will come away knowing what words mean and how to recognize them, not just how to spell them. For grown-ups, the beautiful illustrations will keep you entertained, and you may just manage to broaden your own vocabulary along the way.

MY FIRST INCREDIBLE, AMAZING DICTIONARY **IS A WINNER. THERE ARE MANY CD-ROM PRODUCERS OUT THERE WHO COULD LEARN SOMETHING FROM DORLING KINDERSLEY. WITH ITS GAMING ELEMENT AND EXCELLENT USE OF SOUND AND IMAGE,** *DICTIONARY* **IS A VALUE-ADDED PRODUCT THAT MAKES LEARNING FUN.**

UPSIDE
IT WILL GREATLY INCREASE A CHILD'S VOCABULARY

DOWNSIDE
THERE ARE NO DIRTY WORDS

CONCEPT 10 INTERFACE 10
DEPTH 10 DOLLAR VALUE 10

OVERALL RATINGS

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

EDUCATION

Dazzeloids

Greenblat originally trained as a visual artist (his work was recently shown at Every Picture Tells A Story, a children's art gallery in Los Angeles), and his strong sense of line enhances the graphic quality of the animation in Dazzeloids.

BY MIKKI HALPIN

Rodney Greenblat, creator of Rodney's Wonder Windows and myriad other titles, now brings us his latest. *Dazzeloids* is vintage Greenblat, a complete world within the ROM, with its own characters, history, and moral lessons for the young user. The neon-bright visuals and swift response-time also make this a quality experience.

The Dazzeloids are, briefly, a motley group of beings loosely banded together under the leadership of the fierce Anne Dilly Whim. She and her cohorts are fighting against the evil boredom perpetrated on the world by the Mediogre, head of Blando Corporation. In the little history section, you can learn of each character's history, good and bad points. While this may seem like a section to further future merchandising, it also serves, I think, a higher purpose. That is, if you consider playing *Dazzeloids* a higher purpose. I'm the reviewer, and I do.

It's pretty cool when even the superheros have bad qualities. For example, Yednor Talbneerg (Try that one backwards. Subtle, eh?), we are told, tends to get "overloaded by complicated problems and stress, and becomes a total basket case." Ahh, his fatal flaw. A classic dramatic device, known to both playwrights and comic book scripters alike. Who can forget Superman and the Kryptonite Achilles Heel? It makes the hero human, folks; it makes the whole thing just that much more possible, and I for one, salute it.

IT'S HARD NOT TO LIKE THE DAZZELOIDS, THEY'RE SO DARN CUTE

The ROM is filled with adult-friendly, liberal-oriented subliminal messages: Television is bad; banks are bad; conservatives are bad—the program actually describes the hapless inhabitants of Boredom Town as "conservatives, afraid of change." With this attention to detail, however, it's surprising to run across a few glitches in technical and thematic areas. The menu bar kept reappearing in each of the story sections, and wouldn't hide itself, adding an unaesthetic note to each sequence. And, for a program so concerned with good and evil and the propagation of correct behavior and morality, it's odd that at the end of each adventure, the Dazzeloids replenish themselves with such unhealthy food. In one section they actually consume what is referred to as a "wholesome, healthy" meal of biscuits and gravy. Has anybody informed the American Heart Association about this?

ALL QUIBBLING ASIDE, *DAZZELOIDS* IS A GREAT EXPERIENCE. THE MANNERED QUALITY OF THE GRAPHICS AND THE ATTENTION TO DETAIL—GREENBLAT TRADEMARKS—ARE IN FULL FORCE. THE PROGRAM IS FULL OF CATCHY SONGS AND EVEN A DAZZELOID DREAM SEQUENCE. WITH ITS STORIES OF COURAGE IN THE FACE OF BAD CORPORATIONS AND ENFORCED MEDIOCRITY, *DAZZELOIDS* OUGHT TO PLEASE BOTH PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

UPSIDE
FANTASTIC ART AND STORIES

DOWNSIDE
NOT ENOUGH STUFF ON THE DISC, I WANTED MORE!

OVERALL **8**
CONCEPT **8** INTERFACE **9**
DEPTH **8** DOLLAR VALUE **5**

EDUCATION

Recess in Greece

SYSTEM MAC

RATING: 8

This children's title is loosely based on Homer's *The Iliad*. While attempting to pass a quiz, Morgan the monkey is sucked into the blackboard and sent back to ancient Greece. Morgan learns about the culture of this most significant ancient land. The program is easy for kids to use and run, making this interaction both educational and enjoyable. The purpose of *Recess in Greece* is to underscore the significance of History.

Kid Pix Studio

SYSTEM:MAC

RATING: 7

Kid Pix Studio allows children to create their own pictures and puppet shows, among other things. While there are many programs that perform these functions, *Kid Pix* stands alone. The interface is fun and easy. Children have many options to help make unique creations. The personalized puppet show allows kids to choose the puppet, sounds, backgrounds, and to programe all the movements. *Kid Pix* is easy for even the youngest CD-ROM users.

Webster's Dictionary for Kids

SYSTEM: MPC

RATING: 6

Mastering the vocabulary of the English language is often a difficult task for young children. *Webster's Dictionary for Kids* is an easy-to-use dictionary that is colorful and fun. Aside from being a standard dictionary, *Webster's* features word games to help children better familiarize themselves with the language. This program is not extremely original but it serves its purpose well.

Vistie Visits the Ocean

SYSTEM: MAC

RATING:7

Vistie is the name of a video sitter that probably appeals to children and could contest the throne of Barney on the adult annoyance chart. This program is fun, informative, and colorful for kids. Vistie performs songs about sea life and teaches kids about the oceans around them. I must say that this program urges children to love the parents who shelled out big bucks to bring Vistie into their home.

Point Of Reference

BY MIKKI HALPIN

CD-ROM is having a troubled adolescence. Having finally gained a widespread installed base and the eye of the media, the industry has responded to this opportunity by promptly putting its head in the sand, product-wise. A recent poll by *Wired* magazine showed that, of those who responded, over half had bought their CD-ROM drives solely to play *Myst.* and never used them again. That's a lot of dust gathering out there for a medium that's supposed to be replacing, depending on who you ask, the phone, the television, the movie theater, the U.S. Postal Service, or some combination thereof. So c'mon, what is the big problem?

Let's face it, lots of these titles really are garbage. On some, the content's bad. On others, just the interface is bad. We've had to coin a new phrase for others: "repurpose-lessness." Repurposeless titles are the ones where some big content holder decides that a CD-ROM would be the perfect way to squeeze a few extra pennies from a moldy old property they have the rights to. All too often it's a property particularly suited to another medium and more than a little gets lost in the translation. I wouldn't be at all surprised to open my mailbox one day and find that Jerry Seinfeld's home movies are now playing in fully digital QuickTime glory. Who'll be at the door, Elaine or Kramer? You choose!

One convenient place to lay blame is the press. The media's reaction to the interactive platforms has been passive and blindly positive in response to the glare of an endless bitstream of product announcements, new platforms, trans-national mergers, and copyright lockdowns. In a concerted effort to appear informed, aware, and "wired," journalistic bulletins and academic theories have indulged in breathless, oxymoronic catch-phrases like "virtual democracy" rather than offering any sort of reasoned analysis or historical perspective.

Retailers can take some of the rap too. Though CD-ROM still maintains an unusually high degree of mail-order sales, it is increasingly sold alongside other media such as books, tapes, and audio CDs. However, relatively few stores provide a test-area or opportunity to see what it is exactly you're shelling out 50 bucks for. Recently, at least one store in Los Angeles has begun to offer rentals, and perhaps soon others will follow suit.

But ultimately, dear reader, it's up to you. You've got to demand better stuff from these people. You've got e-mail—use it. Write to Ion and tell them you thought *Jump* was insultingly thin. Write to Knowledge Adventure and tell them which titles your kids like. Write to us, even. Your opinion is as good as anyone else's.

Dust off your CD-ROM drive. Figure out what you want. *Demand it*. We all want CD-ROM to grow up, and out of this awkward age.

If you should
think this is
Utopian, then I
would ask you to
consider why it
is Utopian.
-Bertolt Brecht,
Theory of Radio

Hawking is attempting, as he explic- itly states, to understand the mind of God. And this makes all the more unexpected the conclu- sion of the effort, at least so far: a universe with no edge in space, no beginning or end in time, and nothing for a Creator to do.
 -Carl Sagan

DESTINATION:
CYGNUS X-1

ESTIMATED ARRIVAL: 341
DISTANCE: 7 234 LY

CONDITION OF STAR:
EMITTING X RAYS

A Brief Histo

BY MIKKI HALPIN

Stephen Hawking has that sexy cyborg appeal going for him. Writhing around in his shiny metal exoskeletal wheelchair, his body seems permanently ready for some kind of futuristic bondage scene. And when he speaks, through that detached, processed voicebox—whew! It may not vibrate but it works for me, not to mention his amazing intellect, and those lucrative best-selling book and picture deals. Now Hawking comes to us in an even more personal manner, via this CD-ROM version of A Brief History of Time.

A Brief History of Time explains everything from black holes to the meaning of life itself (well, almost). Developed by upstart Crunch Media (now called Expanded Media—see fea-

ture story this issue) in Santa Monica, CA, the ROM's visual metaphor is a visit to Hawking's office, a strange spaceship-like environment in which the author is available to answer your questions and explain the universe. Narrated in its entirety by Hawking himself, the entire text of the book is here, with much more content added via graphics, animations of difficult concepts and a few guest speakers. The text, besides being oh-so-retro, need never be visited, as all of the ideas and concepts it contains are presented and expanded in the various areas of the disc. Why read about the Theory of Relativity when you can see an animation of it, one which involves a cliff, a game of ping pong, Albert Einstein and a funicular to nowhere?

You can also visit the Hawking space craft, looking out across the

"event horizon" and into a black hole with more narration. Click on the microscope in a corner of Hawking's office and shrink yourself down to the size of a quark, then find out what the durn things are. Finally, you'll know the difference between the absolute future and the future lightcore of an event. All the sections and exploratory areas of the disc are linked conceptually so you can leap around in an intuitive manner, piecing together theories as you please. There's also a glossary, though unfortunately this isn't linked, one of the only boners in this scientific theme park of a disc. One of the more significant things Hawking does is to pay homage to

JUST AS HAWKING'S BOOK RECONFIGURES TIME ITSELF OUT OF THE LINEAR UNDERSTANDING WE HAVE OF IT, THE ROM MORPHS THE CONTENT OF THE BOOK INTO AN INTUITIVE, ORGANIC ENVIRONMENT. THIS IS AS CLOSE AS YOU CAN COME TO SPENDING A WEEKEND OR TWO PICKING ONE OF THE GREATEST BRAINS OF OUR (OR ANYONE ELSE'S) TIME, MEANWHILE NEATLY AVOIDING ANY DANGER OF A POP QUIZ.

ory of Time

those whose work his draws on, most notably Einstein, Newton, and Galileo. Each is lovingly profiled, and as much attention is paid to Einstein's work in the peace movement as to his scientific achievements. Hawking clearly considers himself lucky to be part of this pantheon, and speaks of the others in an almost collegial manner, as he'd just come from having coffee with them down at the Physics café or something.

e effect of free fall can be demonstrated by imaginin ying Ping Pong in a tram at the edge of a cliff.

UPSIDE
UNIVERSAL APPEAL!

DOWNSIDE
YOUR OTHER CDS WILL COLLECT DUST

CONCEPT 9 INTERFACE 9
DEPTH 9 DOLLAR VALUE 9

OVERALL RATINGS

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Truly inter-
active, the
Microsoft Art
Gallery blurs
the line between
tinkering and
teaching.

Microsoft Art

BY DOMINIC GONZALES

There are some powerful tools available to CD-ROM users, tools that will shape and transform the home computer industry, and drag all the technophobes kicking and screaming into the twenty-first century.

Then there are products like the *Microsoft Art Gallery*, which uses those tools in a very subtle way. In the process, it teaches you more about art than you could learn from reading a book. Truly interactive, the *Microsoft Art Gallery* blurs the line between tinkering and teaching.
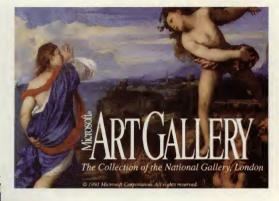
The minute you put this CD on, you know you're in for a treat. Using the resources of the National Gallery of London as a backdrop, a very user-friendly interface will guide you through the lives of the great masters, take you on a tour of the gallery, or give you an in-depth narrative account of restoration, perspective, and even history. These guided tours also include animated examples of artists' intentions in their work. The novice

TRAVEL EUROPE AND SAMPLE THE ARTS. AND YOU *CAN* DRINK THE WATER.

Microsoft **ART GALLERY**

The Collection of the National Gallery, London

Historical Atlas of the Collection

The Historical Atlas contains all the works in the National Gallery Collection arranged according to where and when they were painted.

The entries deal with important artistic centres like Florence or Paris, time is divided into periods in units of 25 years.

The paintings within each entry are laid out chronologically.

Please select a place or a time ...

▶ Antwerp	▶ Haarlem	▶ Delft	▶ Amsterdam
▶ Bruges			
▶ Brussels			▶ Cologne
▶ London			▶ Rest of Germany
▶ Rest of Britain			▶ Milan
▶ Paris			▶ Brescia
▶ Rest of France			▶ Venice
▶ Madrid			
▶ Rest of Spain			
▶ Rest of Europe	▶ Other Places	▶ Rest of Italy	

MASTER-M MASTER - MARINUS

ARTISTS' LIVES

▶ MASTER of St Giles	▶ MANET
▶ MASTER of St Ursula Legend	▶ MANSI MAGDALEN Master
▶ MASTER of St Veronica	▶ MANSUETI
▶ MASTER of the View of St Gudule	▶ MANTEGNA
▶ MABUSE	▶ MARATTA
▶ MACHIAVELLI	
▶ MADRAZO	▶ MARCO del Buono
▶ MAES	▶ MARCO d'Oggiono
▶ MAGDALEN LEGEND Master	▶ MARGARITO of Arezzo
▶ MAINARDI	▶ MARIESCHI
▶ MAINERI	▶ MARINUS van Reymerswaele
▶ MANCINI	

A B C D E F G H I J K L Masters M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Gallery

and the professional artist will both be entertained and enlightened.

You can also go around the world in 80 frames with the Atlas feature. Pick a period from 1300 to 1900 and check out what was shakin' 'em up in the art community during those times. Because the intuitive interface and stunning guided tours are intelligent and understandable, you begin to wish that the static Lives of the Artist were similarly illustrated. But there is no narration and only the artist's body of work to keep you company. It's like being all alone in the museum.

BUT THAT MINOR SETBACK SHOULDN'T STOP A FAMILY FROM OWNING *MICROSOFT ART GALLERY*. THERE'S ENOUGH HERE TO PUT A PARENT'S MIND AT EASE. IF YOU CAN'T GET YOUR KIDS TO GO TO THE MUSEUM, BRING THE MUSEUM TO THE KIDS.

UPSIDE A GREAT REFERENCE SUPPLEMENT TO ART HISTORY CLASSES

DOWNSIDE THE SUBJECT MATTER IS TO BROAD TO COVER IN ONE DISC

CONCEPT 9 INTERFACE 9
DEPTH 9 DOLLAR VALUE 10

OVERALL RATINGS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The Tate Gallery: Exploring Mod

Exploring
Modern Art
feels like it
should be
packaged with
a cappuccino.

BY DOMINIC GONZALES

For those of you who know that Cubism isn't what happens when you move to Cuba, or that Pop Art isn't art that your father loves, this disc's for you. *Tate Gallery: Exploring Modern Art* does just that; it explores modern art. Although it's not as remedially broken down into digestible pieces as the *Microsoft Art Gallery*, it will give you key knowledge that you can use at your next party.

Admittedly, this CD flies by a lot faster if you have some background (or at least some interest) in Modern Art. But for the uninitiated, there's extensive narration (each piece is explained, unlike Microsoft's), and a complete walk-through of some of the major players in the MA world, including Picasso, Barbara Hepworth, David Hockney and others.

The narrative is crystal-clear, but the tone is a little condescending.

ern Art

BARBARA HEPWORTH'S THREE FORMS, DONE AFTER THE BIRTH OF HER TRIPLETS IN 1934.

POP ART EXPLAINED.

Maybe they don't want you in this gallery after all. But the tone is unimportant. The content is what matters, and the content of the narrative for this CD is precise, informative, and easily understandable. You can even create and save your own gallery, with your favorite pieces. Then, when a friend comes over, you can explain what each piece means to the Modern Art world, along with the intricacies of the artists' lives. It's a good way to learn about art...and to lose friends.
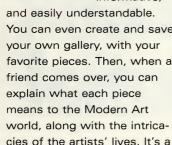
IS *TATE GALLERY: EXPLORING MODERN ART* WORTH THE PRICE OF ADMISSION? YES, IF YOU'RE GOING TO SPEND MONEY ON A BOOK ABOUT MODERN ART, THEN YOU SHOULD REALLY SAVE IT FOR THIS CD. EXPLORING MODERN ART IS A GREAT COMPANION PIECE TO THE *MICROSOFT ART GALLERY*. HAVING BOTH OF THEM WILL CERTAINLY ENHANCE BOTH YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND COMPREHENSION OF ART.
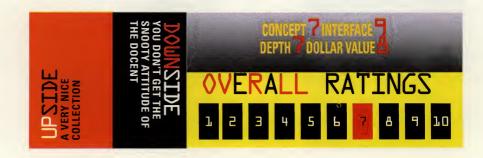
IF YOU LOOK CLOSELY, YOU'LL SEE TWO DOCK WORKERS PULLING A BOX...AND YOU'LL KNOW WHERE THEY GOT THE IDEA FOR THOSE ANNOYING DOTTED POSTERS IN STRIP MALLS.

DYNAMISM
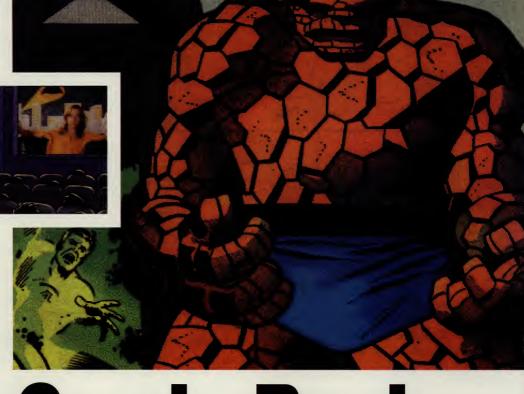
THE ARTWORK MUST BE SEEN ON A 256-COLOR MONITOR TO BE APPRECIATED.

UPSIDE
A VERY NICE COLLECTION

DOWNSIDE
YOU DON'T GET THE SNOOTY ATTITUDE OF THE DOCENT

CONCEPT 7 INTERFACE 9
DEPTH 7 DOLLAR VALUE 8

OVERALL RATINGS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

REFERENCE

Hot tip:
Drag the
comic book
fonts suit-
case into
your System
folder, oth-
erwise text
passages
will appear
in too large
a font and
run over
into graph-
ics, drop
off pages
and general-
ly appear to
be a layout
nightmare.
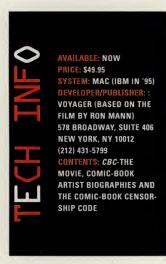
Comic Book Confidential

BY TODD KRIEGER

From the CD-ROM publisher that brought you *Maus* comes another foray into the vibrant, creative world of comic books—the artists, the underground, the medium and the message: *Comic Book Confidential*. Starting with the film of the same name as a springboard, Voyager has added additional footage in the form of comic books that can be viewed onscreen, extensive biographies of featured artists and an amusing reprint of the Comics Code's censorship rules.

While Voyager has done little more than add supplementary materials to an already impressive work, they have done comic readers and historians a great service in reformatting a crucial

reference work. The *CBC* project set out to prove the thesis that comic books, in and of themselves, are a valid art-form on par with more traditional modes of expression such as novel-writing, sculpting and painting and, as evidenced by this disc, has succeeded in doing so magnificently.

The movie can be viewed in its entirety through a QuickTime window sitting squarely within a cartoon rendered movie screen. While you are given the option of blowing the movie up to full-screen proportions, the resolution breaks down and it just ain't worth it. The film itself is divided into chapters, which Voyager has neatly indexed to allow fluid shifting back and forth throughout the film—should you wish to select a particular interview you're interested in, a hero you

Artists Index

2 of 3

THE COMIC THAT PLUGS YOU IN!!

want to see or a particular era that fascinates you. An optional control bar allows you to scroll through the movie at will.

Credit for the most innovative work on the CD has to go to director Ron Mann for his innovative filmographs—comic books brought to life with the help of crafty camerawork and cool sound effects. These short segments, which Mann discusses in an interview, are the best translation I've seen of the comic-book medium. Specifically, the work done with Frank Miller's epic Batman tale, "The Dark Knight", takes the comic book work done by Miller and his colleagues to even greater heights of imagination, just in one 20-second micromovie.

By adding the artists' biographies and samples of their work, Voyager nicely complements the documentary film. However, despite commissioning comic book 'man of the moment,' Scott McCloud, author of *Understanding Comics*, to write the biographies, they drop the multimedia ball. The biographies are presented simply as text to be clicked through, no smashing sound effects, no funky art and no voiceover. In fact, if anything mars this CD at all, it's the silence that permeates it while clicking through the comic art and the textual passages. As with the movie, you're allowed to blow up the comic pages through the use of iconic control panels but, in doing so, you often cut

the image into nonsensical pieces before you can say, "Misappropriation of technology"

An ironic side-treat is the Comics Code, which features such straightforward gems as, "In every instance, good shall triumph over evil and the criminal shall be punished for his misdeeds." And one that certainly would cause almost every adolescent hero book on the shelves to be banned: "Females shall be drawn realistically without exaggeration of any physical qualities."

***COMIC BOOK CONFIDENTIAL* IS A MICROCOSM OF EVERYTHING THAT IS BOTH RIGHT AND WRONG IN THE CD-ROM PUBLISHING INDUSTRY. WHAT'S BEST ABOUT THE DISC IS THAT IT TAKES AN ORIGINAL WORK—THE DOCUMENTARY FILM OF THE SAME TITLE—AND ADDS BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ARTISTS, DISCUSSIONS WITH CREATORS AND CLIP-ART, ALL OF WHICH SERVES TO GIVE THE FILM GREATER CONTEXT. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT DOESN'T GO FAR ENOUGH, AS THE BEST PART OF THE DISC IS THE FILM ITSELF, WHICH MAKES THIS CD-ROM NOTHING MORE THAN A REAPPROPRIATION OF AN EXISTING WORK.**

UPSIDE
THE MOVIE IS BRILLIANT

DOWNSIDE
YOU MAY BE BETTER OFF WATCHING IT ON VIDEOTAPE

CONCEPT 7 INTERFACE 9
DEPTH 7 DOLLAR VALUE 6

OVERALL RATINGS

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

The more things change, the more they stay the same: In 1937, Joe DiMaggio held out for a raise from $15,000 to $45,000. When the Yankee bosses told him that all-time great Lou Gehrig was only making $41,000, DiMaggio's answer was terse and to the point: Gehrig is underpaid.

Microsoft Complete
Baseball

BY JEFFREY TSCHILTSCH

1994 should have been one of the definitive seasons for the professional sport known as Major League Baseball. During this 125th Anniversary, players such as Ken Griffey, Jr. and Frank Thomas chased records that had proved elusive for decades and the new divisional realignment and playoff structure provided fiery debate for every sports talk show Bob Costas visited. Then the players went on strike and the season abruptly ended.

Pretty lousy timing for Microsoft, who released their *Complete Baseball* multimedia reference disc earlier in the season. But if you can push aside your disdain for baseball's current situation, you'll find that this disc provides a fascinating trip through 125 years of baseball lore.

The Contents screen provides access to the seven main areas of Complete Baseball: Players, Teams, Records, Almanac, Chronicle, Trivia and Baseball Daily. The Players section provides biographies on over 1000 of baseball's greatest stars and season-by-season summaries for active players. Numerous pictures are included which change as you page down through the text and hypertext links let you jump from Aaron to Ruth to Gehrig to the Yankees, and then return to where you came from.

Teams

back
copy
print
options

change team ‡ **Chicago White Sox**

Scandal

When the Sox los[...] Cincinnati, there [...] came to light for [...] looked better tha[...] back in May after[...] had risen to the th[...] Felsch, Collins, a[...]

Buck Weaver
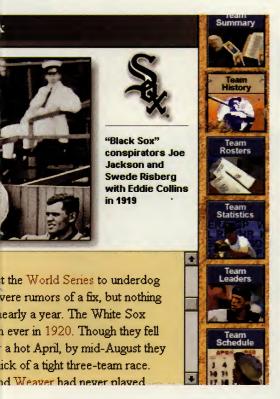
Thanks to the incredible storage capabilities of CD-ROM, *Complete Baseball* has complete batting, pitching, base running and fielding statistics for *every* player who ever made it to "The Show." Clicking on the Player's Statistics button will display the stats for the last season available for the current player, and you can either roll through the years or select a specific season via the drop-down menus.

The Team section provides details on all 28 major league franchises, including the team's history, a summary of the 1993 season, team statistics

and leaders, and includes the rosters as scheduled for the 1994 season. From the Records menu you can view the top 50 player and team record holders in batting, pitching, base running and fielding in either season or career modes. The Almanac provides a lengthy summary of every season since 1900 and includes All-Star and

"Black Sox" conspirators Joe Jackson and Swede Risberg with Eddie Collins in 1919

t the World Series to underdog vere rumors of a fix, but nothing early a year. The White Sox ever in 1920. Though they fell a hot April, by mid-August they ick of a tight three-team race. d Weaver had never played

Post-Season game summaries, award winners, league leaders as well as the season's final standings.

The Chronicle section is made up of several articles giving an historical perspective of the game. Here you can read about the sport's formative years, learn about previous leagues such as the National Association and the Federal League, or read baseball stories ranging from the signing of Jackie Robinson to baseball collecting. There are also background articles on the history of baseball's awards and excerpts from the *New York Times* on the greatest 100 players. Once you think you've soaked up enough information, try your hand at the All-Star Trivia Challenge, which can quiz you on data from eight different

categories, from rules and statistics to famous baseball characters.

The Baseball Daily feature had its usefulness cut short by the strike. For a mere $1.25 per call, the latest scores, statistics, standings and news could be transmitted directly to your computer via modem, keeping *Complete Baseball* up-to-date for the entire season.

Complete Baseball's interface is nicely laid out and simple to use; I doubt many people will ever consult the help text. Unfortunately its simplicity also limits its functionality. For example, there's no way to perform complex searches or queries on the disc's statistical data. There's no index to quickly play video and audio clips, although you can use the Windows Media Player to play these files directly from the disc once you figure out which directory they're in. While pictures and text can be copied and pasted into other applications, the standard Windows ctrl-c copy function isn't supported, forcing you to go through a pretty mouse-intensive process.

FOR THE MOST PART, THOUGH, *COMPLETE BASEBALL* DELIVERS ON ITS PROMISE OF SOMETHING FOR EVERY BASEBALL FAN. THE ARTICLES ARE WELL-WRITTEN AND PROVIDE FASCINATING INSIGHT INTO THE PLAYERS AND PERSONALITIES WHO HAVE SHAPED THE NATIONAL PASTIME. WITH THOUSANDS OF SHARP PICTURES AND AN INCREDIBLE WEALTH OF STATISTICS, THIS DISC MIGHT BE THE ONLY BASEBALL REFERENCE YOU'LL EVER NEED, AND IF THE STRIKE CONTINUES, YOU'LL NEVER NEED TO PURCHASE AN UPGRADE!

UPSIDE
A BEVY OF B-BALL INFO

DOWNSIDE
NOT TOO INTERESTING TO THE UNINITIATED BASEBALL FAN

CONCEPT 9 INTERFACE 8
DEPTH 9 DOLLAR VALUE 9

OVERALL RATINGS

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

R E F E R E N C E
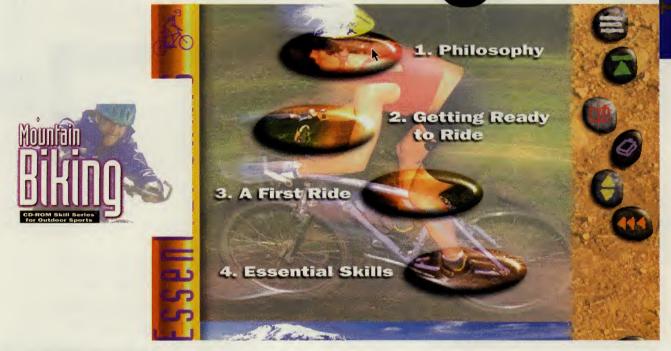
Mountain Biking

BY TODD KRIEGER
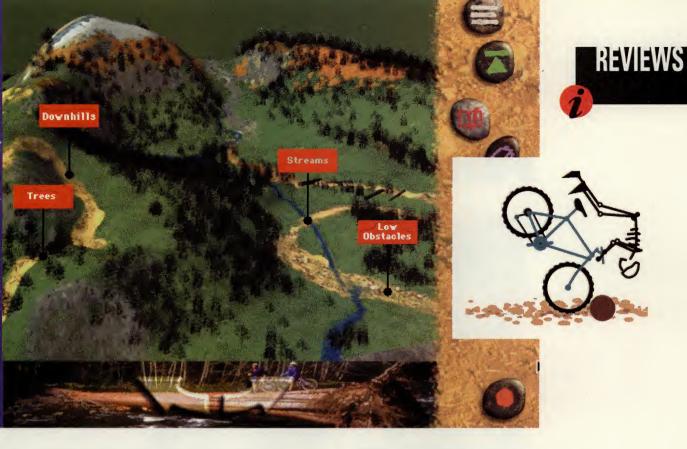
If there were a category for subjects least likely to make their way to the CD-ROM format, then a how-to manual on mountain-biking would have to be near the top of the list. On the surface, the idea seems so ludicrous that it's difficult to make that first click, but if you take the plunge you'll be amply rewarded. *Mountain Biking* is literally crammed with information, but it's not about the history of the sport or leading spots to go "shred" around the globe: Instead, it's about actually riding a mountain bike.

Forgetting for one moment that the only way to learn how to ride a mountain bike and improve on those skills would be to actually go outside, this is a remarkable CD. Split into three distinct categories: Essential Skills, Mountain Bikes, and Trail Riding, this disc offers everything from philosophical tips on how to approach your mountain bike—"Mountain biking is inherently a fun thing to do and a fun

thing to learn to do"—to a part-by-part breakdown of the bike, including the "Jesus Nut" which holds your front wheel in place.

The most interesting section of the disk is Trail Riding, which opens with a virtual terrain featuring the various hazards and challenges you would encounter on a ride, such as streams, logs, low obstacles, and surface conditions. Clicking on one of these trouble-spots opens a smaller window featuring an animated skeleton on a mountain bike, executing the requisite maneuvers. Excellent stereo sound effects complement images of a bike crashing through water or struggling up a gravel road, and when you click at the bottom of this screen, the virtual terrain rotates, *Myst*-style.

THE COMPREHENSIVENESS OF THE DISC IS IMPRESSIVE, BEGINNING WITH MENTAL LESSONS ON HOW TO APPROACH THE BIKE AND MOVING ON TO THE BEST WAY TO AVOID THE DEADLY FACEPLANT BY LEAPING OVER THE HANDLEBARS. WHILE THE LESSONS ARE WORTHWHILE, BOTH IN TEXT AND IN WELL RENDERED GRAPHICAL ANIMATIONS, IT IS BEYOND LUDICROUS TO BELIEVE A PERSON COULD TRANSLATE SOMETHING AS PHYSICAL AS LEAPING OVER A BICYCLE'S HANDLEBARS FROM A COMPUTER LESSON INTO ACTUALITY.

Main Menu

- Essential Skills
- Mountain Bikes
- Trail Riding

Preferences   Help   Quit

UPSIDE
A PRETTY PRESENT-ATION, FULL OF FACTS

DOWNSIDE
YOU CAN'T BIKE WHILE YOU'RE WATCHING IT

CONCEPT 3 INTERFACE 9
DEPTH 9 DOLLAR VALUE 4

OVERALL RATINGS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Microsoft Ancient Lands

*I am a citizen,
not of Athens
or Greece, but
of the world.
-Socrates*

REVIEW BY JEFF JAMES

The third title in Microsoft's *Exploration* series, *Ancient Lands* will take you on an audio-visual journey to the ancient empires of the past: Greece, Egypt and the Roman Empire. *Ancient Lands* runs under Microsoft Windows, making installation and setup a point-and-click process. Once installed, you'll see that this program covers a great expanse of history: From the Trojan Horse to the life of King Tut, *Ancient Lands* covers it all—and covers it thoroughly.

Key to the effectiveness of the program is the stylish, functional interface. Beginning at an overhead map of the ancient Mediterranean, you can select Greece, Egypt or Rome, which will in turn provide information on the ancient empires centered in those areas. Once you've decided which civilization you want more information on, you can follow the path laid out for you by clicking on an icon in the lower right corner of the screen. If you'd rather explore on your own, *Ancient Lands* exploits the concepts of hypertext to the fullest. For example, in a section entitled "Work and Play," I selected information on the life of a gladiator. A new screen appeared, providing all sorts of information on gladiators and coliseum life. I clicked on a film-clip dubbed "Hollywood Legends" which showed a scene from

a film on gladiators. After the clip was finished, I selected an icon entitled "Sparta," which then took me to an informative screen on that ancient Greek city-state. Clicking on "Alexander the Great," I was then sent to another screen chronicling the life of the famous Greek warrior. In just a few mouse-clicks, I went from information on Roman gladiators to information on a famous Greek warrior. Indeed, *Ancient Lands* allows you to quickly jump from Greek to Egyptian civilizations, then back to information on the Roman Empire. If you grow tired of searching for information yourself, you can draft the services of one of eighteen different "guides" who will walk you through certain aspects of the program. Simply select your guide (ranging from a Roman slave girl to an Egyptian Pharaoh) and he or she will take you on a narrated tour of the world through their eyes. It's interesting material, and it adds additional depth to an already robust product.

There are plenty of other nice touches, too. Sound is used to good effect; you'll hear the clashing of swords and shouting men as you're reading about ancient wars and battles. There are also several "mini-games" that will test your knowledge, such as matching ancient leaders with the empires they ruled. You can even make screensavers and Windows wallpaper out of the included artwork. *Ancient Lands* isn't perfect; it could have used more info on ancient Chinese, Aztec, Mayan and African cultures. As is, it should have been more correctly dubbed "Ancient

Lands of the Mediterranean". There are tidbits of info on these civilizations, but nowhere near the level of detail lavished on the Egyptian, Greek and Roman cultures. Microsoft has targeted this product at teenagers, and perhaps it has zeroed in on that market a bit too well. Some of the spoken narration, particularly in the area of Greek gods, is borderline obnoxious. After hearing the goddess Aphrodite whine like a teenage Valley girl and the inane chatter of Dionysus (who sounds like he's auditioning for a part in *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*) I quickly decided to avoid that section altogether. A little less overacting would have made *Ancient Lands* more enjoyable for all ages. Despite these minor problems, it finally emerges as a first-class reference product.

APART FROM SOME OBNOXIOUS SPOKEN DIALOGUE AND A DEARTH OF INFORMATION ON NON-MEDITERRANEAN CULTURES, *ANCIENT LANDS* IS A TOP-NOTCH PRODUCT. A USER-FRIENDLY INTERFACE TEAMED WITH IMPRESSIVE VISUALS AND A SURPRISING DEGREE OF FACTUAL DEPTH COMBINE TO MAKE *ANCIENT LANDS* A WINNER.

UPSIDE
EXCELLENT MIX OF ENTERTAINMENT AND EDUCATION FOR KIDS

DOWNSIDE
NOT FIT FOR IN-DEPTH USE BY ADULTS

CONCEPT 7 INTERFACE 9
DEPTH 9 DOLLAR VALUE 8

OVERALL RATINGS

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

R E F E R E N C E

*One Tribe
Takes You On A
Personalized
Interactive
Global Trek.*

One Tribe

BY ALEX KASTEN

The first thing that hits you when you begin your journey through *One Tribe* is its encyclopedic scope. You can literally jump around the globe with a click of the mouse, visiting peoples and cultures from Afghanistan to Vanuatu. Relying on vast amounts of information from several outside publishing sources, *One Tribe* features more than 3,000 pictures, 600 of which are maps, video documentary clips, music samples from around the world, as well as thousands of political, cultural, demographic, economic, and other geographic facts.

Given the enormity of the subject matter (you can't get much larger than 'The World' as your topic) and the large amounts of multimedia content,

the organization of the information becomes extra critical. *One Tribe* achieves this by immediately inviting you into the living room of Pip Dann from MTV, your guide for the program. Pip's living room is filled with objects that come alive and take you to different parts of the program when clicked with the mouse. For example, if you click on the stringed musical instrument hanging on the wall above the fire place, you access a library of music samples from around the world, courtesy of Real World Records.

If you stay in the living room, Pip turns around in her chair and narrates a linear program that takes you to the different continents, describing their features. This narration can be interrupted at any time if you want more in-depth information. Simply click on any of the live objects in the room.

LEFT: AFRICA MAP AND A
POLITICAL MAP OF TOGO

Clicking on the globe lets you access geographic maps of your continent of interest. Clicking on the video tape boxes takes you on a photo tour of the different peoples who inhabit your continent of choice. Clicking on the book allows you to page through an address book of countries, accessing more detailed information about demographics, urban conditions, etc.

From any point in *One Tribe*, you may pull up a control panel which—in keeping with the tribal theme—resembles a wooden flute. On the flute are icons that take you to different points within the program. Perhaps the icon that helps you most is the one that takes you back to Pip's living room—the place where all your fact-finding journeys begin. One unique feature of *One Tribe* is that when you interrupt Pip's narration to venture outside the living room, you always pick up right where she left off upon your return. This helpful feature provides you with a linear feel in a program that is otherwise geared to globe-hopping.

For a title that offers such a breadth of information, the navigational features of *One Tribe* are a little tough to figure out at first. But once you grasp the concept of leaving the living room for more information, your journey really picks up speed. The icon I had the most trouble figuring out on the flute toolbar was the symbol for "quit," which is represented by a skull. Fortunately, with *One Tribe*, you won't feel compelled to use this feature very often.

CLOCKWISE FROM LOWER LEFT:

PIP'S LIVING ROOM—WHERE IT ALL BEGINS.

FROM AFGHANISTAN TO VANUATU, CROSS-REFERENCE YOUR JOURNEY THROUGH THIS ADDRESS BOOK.

THESE THUMBNAIL IMAGES TAKE YOU ON YOUR PHOTO ESSAY OF THE WORLD'S PEOPLES.

BOTTOM LINE: OVERALL, *ONE TRIBE* IS A JOURNEY THAT WILL HELP VIEWERS OF ALL AGES DISPEL CULTURAL STEREOTYPES AND MYTHS. IT'S AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF CONSIDERABLE MAGNITUDE THAT SUCCEEDS IN ITS ATTEMPT TO UNITE THE PEOPLES AND CULTURES OF THE WORLD THROUGH AN INTERACTIVE MEDIUM—AN EXPERIENCE WELL WORTH THE INVESTMENT.

UPSIDE
UNIQUE APPROACH TO GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE

DOWNSIDE
REEKS OF POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

CONCEPT 10 INTERFACE 8
DEPTH 8 DOLLAR VALUE 10

OVERALL RATINGS

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

THE TOUR

...and god said to noah, take ye and build ye an ark, and take ye two of every animal that walks the earth, and two of every bird that flies through the air, that ye may repopulate after the coming flood.

Behind the Scenes at the Zoo

BY MIKKI HALPIN

Wildlife preservation ain't nothing new. What else do you think Noah was up to when he filled up that ark with two of every animal, and two of every bird? If you think the rainforests are an example of a shrinking habitat, try the wrath of God on for size, bub. Noah had the right idea—breeding is key. After the flood, he had to let all them ponies and birdies go at it fast and furious in order to recreate what we nowadays call bio-diversity.

England's Marwell Zoological Park may not have every type of bird and beast, but they have a pretty strong variety, especially of endangered species. The park was established specifically as an attempt to produce, in captivity, animals whose natural habitat is threatened, and hopefully, one day to return some of the animals to the wild. It's sort of a *Madonna Inn* for our four-legged friends, where every suite is the honeymoon suite.

Marwell enlisted Media Design Interactive to bring the park and its work to CD-ROM. MDI responded with this special double-CD package, *Behind the Scenes at the Zoo*. Disc one has a day in the life of the zoo, plus information on all of the animals at Marwell; disc two has a guided tour of the park, and interviews with key employees such as the staff biologist, the zoo director, and the development coordinator.

The day in the life of the zoo takes itself just a bit too literally. I don't think we really needed that QuickTime

video of the guy unlocking the door to the park and the individual paddocks, did we chaps? Not when there's lots and lots of other videos, enticingly called "mucking out the giraffe bin" and such. (Colorful language those Brits have.) Though the video quality is appalling, even for QuickTime, and the full-frame photo essays make the audio jump, this section is quite fascinating. You get to hear about the individual animals from the keepers who deal with them on a daily basis. The keepers can tell you about their moods, their feed—there's one great bit showing the "Head Carnivore Keeper" chatting away as he carves up great slabs of bloody meat for the tigers—their habitat, and more.

Note to voyeurs and animal lovers: though the Marwell Zoological Park is devoted to repopulation, and there all sorts of racy chats about breeding and mating, you don't actually get to see them go at it. Just like Wild Kingdom, *Behind the Scenes at the Zoo* is strictly G-rated. But it's well worth a peek nonetheless.

The Animals section is exotic; with a screen or two about each animal in the zoo, it can be accessed either through an index or by clicking on a bird's eye view map of the park. Study up on such animals as Geoffrey's Tamarind, the Gemsbok, and the Falcated Teal. Weird name o' the disc award must go, however, to Macleay's Spectre Stink Scorpion. How'd you like to write that on your income tax form? The only thing odd about the Animals section was that it was relentlessly alphabetical, so the Squirrel Monkey is nowhere near, say, Debrazza's Monkey. You have to scroll down and jump around to see all of one genus. It would also have been nice to be able to view the animals by habitat, so you could see how one endangered area is affecting an entire biosystem and set of faunal inhabitants, rather than try to figure it out yourself. Maybe next time, mates?

The tour, on disc two, is a breathless drive round the park with park press officer Gaynor Worman. It's

actually shot from inside the car, so your view of each thing she's talking about is framed by her arm on the steering wheel and the car window. As Gaynor rattles on about the romantic behavior and progeny potential of each beast, gesticulating wildly, you'll find yourself gripping the edge of your desk and wondering how many tourists are now being endangered for the sake of your CD-ROM enjoyment.

VIDEO REPORT

THE ZOO HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PLACE OF STEALTH LEARNING. CHILDREN ARE LURED THERE BECAUSE OF THEIR LOVE OF ANIMALS, BUT GETTING TO PET THE NICE BEASTIE IS ACCOMPANIED BY THE FORCED DIGESTION OF AT LEAST A FEW BIOLOGICAL FACTS. *BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE ZOO* IS NO DIFFERENT, IN THAT IT COMBINES A CHANCE TO BE CLOSER TO SOME ENDANGERED SPECIES, AND A LESSON ABOUT THEIR CHANCES FOR SURVIVAL. IT WILL APPEAL TO ALL THOSE WHO LOVE ANIMALS, AND WHO ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE RAPID DESTRUCTION OF THE EARTH'S ECOSYSTEMS. IN A STRUCTURED, COMPREHENSIVE MULTIMEDIA FORMAT, *ZOO* PROVIDES A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT THE MARWELL TRUST'S PROGRAM TO SAVE ENDANGERED SPECIES.

Vet visits Vesta
Vesta under anaesthetic
Vesta w...
Vesta's treatment
...ip collection
Encounter village
The Ark shop
Tamarin island

UPSIDE A FASCINATING LOOK AT ANIMALS AND THEIR BEHAVIOR

DOWNSIDE SOME OF THE VIDEO SCENES ARE POORLY SHOT

CONCEPT 8 INTERFACE 9
DEPTH 7 DOLLAR VALUE 9

OVERALL RATINGS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	**9**	10

Cinemania

RIGHT: MICKEY ROURKE AND FAYE DUNAWAY IN *BARFLY*

LEFT: JEAN-LUC GODDARD

Everything you need to know about movies, and then some

BY JEREMY BERG

I love movies, plain and simple. From French New Wave to Hong Kong Action to John Ford Westerns, I love each and every aspect that goes into making a film. Yet my love for the cinema doesn't stop at the theater door; it goes far beyond that. I love to look at old movie posters and photographs from the time when Hollywood was actually making decent films—the time when American films were considered works of art and not just something that was made to gross over $100,000,000. Still, there's one thing I enjoy almost as much as seeing great movies, and that thing is reading about great movies. I've spent days upon days in bookstores glancing through the pages of biographies on directors like Roman Polanski and Stanley Kubrick. I even own two film guides that each consist of well over 1,000 pages worth of movie reviews.

But there is one more thing that I own, and that's *Microsoft's Cinemania '95*, which just happens to be the quintessential informative guide to films and filmmakers. Hands down, it's the most in-depth and helpful guide to enhancing one's knowledge of the art of cinema. It's easy to use, it enables you to print out lengthy reviews, and it is for the most part extremely trustworthy.

For starters, *Cinemania '95* is home to four full-length books: *Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 1995,*

Roger Ebert's Video Companion 1995, Pauline Kael's 5001 Nights at the Movies, and movie reviews, film topics and a glossary of movie terms pulled from *Ephraim Katz's The Film Encyclopedia*. But don't worry because everything is accessed with *Cinemania*'s easy-to-use interface. At the click of a button, you're able to bring up Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch* and find out what each critic has to say about that particular film. You can then click on William Holden's name and get a complete biography of the great actor.

Yet *Cinemania* doesn't stop there. It also features 21 film clips from movies such as *Star Wars* and *High Noon*, 137 music excerpts, 162 pieces of dialogue taken from classic films and over 1,000 movie stills to accompany the reviews. As far as the reviews are concerned, whether you're a diehard cinema geek like myself, or just someone who is inter-

'95

section has films like *Two For The Road* and *The Nutty Professor* yet it somehow excludes movies like Sam Raimi's *Evil Dead I & II* and Abel Ferrara's *Ms. 45*. Another portion of this section that I thought would be informative but which ended up being worthless was Ebert's Buried Treasures. From the title of the section you would think that it would contain gems of the past that Roger Ebert would consider great films to rent, yet all of the 25 movies in this section were made between 1981 and the present. Not quite my definition of buried treasures. Don't worry *Cinemania '94* fans, because this is the only downfall to this otherwise great title.

ested in a critic's opinion, you're bound to find a pertinent review of almost any movie you can think of. From the obscure to the mainstream, *Cinemania '95* will have everything you're looking for.

Cinemania '94 owners are probably wondering what the difference is between the two. Besides having about 300 more movie reviews, the only new feature is a section called Cinemania Suggests. This gimmicky section helps you decide what type of movie you are in the mood for, and if you can't decide, it will decide for you. There are 11 categories of films ranging from Mystery and Suspense to a Good Cry. Within these divisions lies alternate categories of films that are along the same lines as the general listing. However, this portion of *Cinemania '95* is for the most part a waste of time. Each section has roughly 25 films to choose from and a lot of them are well off-base. The cult

**SPIN THE WHEEL...
C'MON, THOUSAND!**

WITH EXACTLY 19,667 DIFFERENT FILM REVIEWS AND OVER 24,500 PIECES OF MOVIE INFORMATION, *CINEMANIA '95* IS THE PERFECT COMPANION FOR EVERYONE WHO ENJOYS BEING ENTERTAINED BY THE CINEMA. WITH THIS PRODUCT YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT NOT FINDING THE PERFECT FILM TO RENT. YOU CAN LOOK UP YOUR FAVORITE DIRECTOR, FAVORITE ACTOR OR ACTRESS, HELL, YOU CAN EVEN LOOK UP YOUR FAVORITE CINEMATOGRAPHER. IT'S AS EASY AS SCROLLING THROUGH NAMES, LOOKING OVER LISTS AND CLICKING ON THE APPROPRIATE HYPERTEXT. EVERY CD-ROM LIBRARY SHOULD HAVE A COPY OF *CINEMANIA '95*.

UPSIDE THE LAST WORD ON MOVIE INFORMATION

DOWNSIDE THE MOST OFTEN BORROWED DISC IN YOUR COLLECTION

CONCEPT 9 INTERFACE 10
DEPTH 10 DOLLAR VALUE 10

OVERALL RATINGS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Microsoft Musical Ins

The Lute
AND RELATED INSTRUMEN

In a world where music superiority is defined by how many slugs Tupac Shakur can take, it's good to have something musically credible on the shelf.

LUTES are a large and varied gro of plucked stringed instrume They appear in many shapes and siz they all have a neck, a resonating and strings that run along the leng the instrument.

LUTE

BOUZOUKI

'UD

CHARANGO

CHITARRONE

UKULELE

BY DOMINIC GONZALES

What's not to love about this awesome, explorative CD? You can sample musical instruments, learn about instrument families, and even find out why Jazz is more appealing to people who wear sunglasses all the time. Microsoft's newest music CD-ROM is music to the ears.

And it's not limited to the musical instruments of this country, either. When you look up violins, for example, you also get the Rebab Anduluz, the Hurdy Gurdy, and the Sarangi, to name a few. Each instrument comes

with a sound icon, which lets you hear an audio sampling of your choice. There's also a very informative feature called Sound Box (not available for every instrument) which lets you hear how the instrument sounds in an orchestra, rock band, as chamber music, and in the case of the violin, in the context of bluegrass fiddlin'.

You get a fact file on each instrument that is comprehensive enough for a child's report-writing, but no narration. You also can search for

struments

instruments by name, without going through the Musical Families interface. Speaking of interfaces, the *MMI* menus are descriptive and graphic-based, and lend themselves to lots of exploration, which means that you can sit there and plow through the disc without any documentation (which is good, since none is provided).

Zither

MULTIMEDIA EYEWITNESS

Microsoft

Musical Instruments

ALONG WITH MICROSOFT'S OTHER HOME PRODUCTS, THIS DISC MAKES FOR A GOOD REFERENCE WORK, ESPECIALLY FOR MUSICALLY-INCLINED FAMILIES, OR MUSIC STUDENTS WITH A LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF WORLD INSTRUMENTS. AS A MATTER OF FACT, ANYONE CAN GET SOMETHING OUT OF THIS DISC, SO IT'S DEFINITELY A GOOD CHOICE, ALTHOUGH THE PRICE SEEMS A BIT HIGH. IN A WORLD WHERE MUSICAL SUPERIORITY IS DEFINED BY HOW MANY SLUGS TUPAC SHAKUR CAN TAKE, IT'S GOOD TO HAVE SOMETHING MUSICALLY CREDIBLE ON THE SHELF.

MANDOLIN

UPSIDE INCREDIBLY EASY TO USE AND FASCINATING

DOWNSIDE YOU'RE LEFT WANTING EVEN MORE INFORMATION AND MUSIC

CONCEPT **8** INTERFACE **9**
DEPTH **8** DOLLAR VALUE **9**

OVERALL RATINGS

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Stravinsky

THE COMPOSER SERIES ALWAYS INCLUDES A POCKET AUDIO GUIDE WHICH YOU CAN USE TO VIEW THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF A COMPOSITION AS IT PLAYS.

Film music should have the same relationship to the film drama that somebody's piano playing in my living room has to the book I am reading.
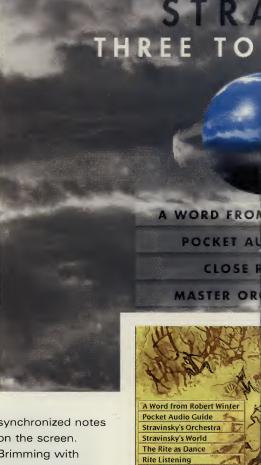-Igor Stravinsky

BY BERNARD DY

Microsoft does it again. *Multimedia Beethoven* and *Multimedia Mozart* were the first titles in a series released to explore the work of noted composers. The subject of music lends itself easily to multimedia, and the two titles meet their goals admirably, blending music, detailed analyses, and plenty of background information.

Multimedia Stravinsky and *Multimedia Strauss* are recent additions to this fine line of music study CD-ROMs. Each disk is similar in format to its predecessors in the composer series, selecting a single noted piece from each maestro to study. The Strauss offering looks at *Three Tone Poems*, and the Stravinsky at *The Rite of Spring*. Music scholars Russell Steinberg and Robert Winter lend expertise to the proceedings as the hosts of the packages.

Each program is organized into a set of chapters. These chapters cover topics such as the detailed analysis of the composition, biographical information of the composer, a bibliography, a trivia game and the tools/instruments of the orchestra.

The heart of the features, the detailed readings of the music, are excellent dissections of the compositions. It really makes use of multimedia because it allows you to listen to the music while also receiving synchronized notes on the screen. Brimming with enthusiasm, the notes explain to users the subtleties of the musical patterns, and also increase the user's listening skills and enjoyment.
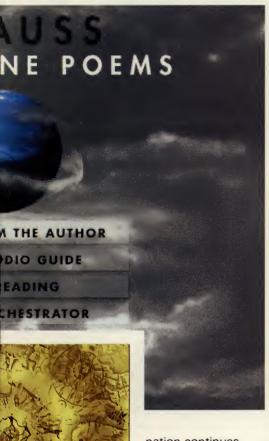
The audience of novice music fans will get the most from these multimedia products. Well-versed listeners and students might already have appreciated these deeper layers of interpretation, though they could certainly still appreciate other perspectives. Regardless of the user's background, however, the presentation quality is absolutely top-notch.

When the music is over, the fasci-

STRA
THREE TO

A WORD FRO
POCKET AU
CLOSE R
MASTER OR

A Word from Robert Winter
Pocket Audio Guide
Stravinsky's Orchestra
Stravinsky's World
The Rite as Dance
Rite Listening
A Close Reading
Bibliography
The Rite Game

& Strauss

REVIEWS

...AUSS
...NE POEMS

...M THE AUTHOR
...DIO GUIDE
...EADING
...CHESTRATOR

nation continues
with forays into the
orchestra. Each disk
includes chapters on
the musical instru-
ments, with emphasis
on items especially
relevant to the respective composi-
tions. Again, multimedia proves to be
an outstanding platform for this
material, for you can listen to an
instrument in addition to reading
about it. Try that with a plain book!

Rounding out these packages are
biographical sketches. Brief but infor-
mative histories are well illustrated
with photos and artwork, and bibli-
ographies and suggested readings are
available to point the hungry music-
lover toward additional sources.

' These two disks, like some
other Microsoft multimedia
titles, take some liberties with
the standard Windows inter-
face conventions you may be
comfortable with. Still, they have
managed to show improvements over
their ancestors. Both have better inte-
grated hypertext glossaries than
Multimedia Beethoven did. While
many of the glossary entries in
Beethoven were not highlighted in the
text, most of the industry-specific
terms in *Stravinsky* and *Strauss* were
printed in different colored text and
are a simple click away. Additionally, in
the pocket audio guide (an abbreviated
overview of the composition's parts)
one can click on a segment and listen
to it. There is a function called the
"play-through" which was previously
available only in the detailed reading
section. Missing from *Beethoven*'s
pocket guide, it commands the pro-
gram to play the music continuously,
rather than stopping at the selected
segment's conclusion.

EACH PROGRAM LETS YOU LISTEN AND
LOOK AT INDIVIDUAL ELEMENTS OF
THE ORCHESTRA AS WELL AS THE
WHOLE.

MODERN FILM ENTHUSIASTS
MIGHT FIND THESE TWO COM-
POSERS A LITTLE MORE INTER-
ESTING THAN THE OTHERS
EXAMINED IN THE MICROSOFT
SERIES. THE TWO ANALYSES
INCLUDE DISCUSSIONS OF THE
COMPOSERS' INFLUENCE ON
MODERN FILM SCORES.

UPSIDE A BEAUTIFUL PRESENTATION
DOWNSIDE A BIT HEADY FOR THE MUSIC LAYMAN

CONCEPT 10 INTERFACE 8
DEPTH 9 DOLLAR VALUE 8

OVERALL RATINGS
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Faces of Life

VIEW THE AWARD-WINNING SPREADS THAT MADE *LIFE* FAMOUS.

LIFE

Nov 22

Weekly Headlines

Firsts!
Trivia!

◄ 1959 ►

CHEVROLET

BY DOMINIC GONZALES

Reference libraries may soon be out of work with the explosion of archived magazine CD-ROMs. Life Magazine now has their greatest covers from 1936 to 1972 on CD, along with a whole bevy of other, related topics.

To appreciate this disc you need to be a fan of Life's award winning covers. Some of the historic ones are examples of the golden age of American journalism, but for the most part, the covers represent our changing country. Sometimes lighthearted, sometimes soul-stirring, the covers themselves are worth a look. But Creative Multimedia, the distributors of this product, also added a few other specs that really make the disc an entertaining multimedia product, not a dry reference work. You can delve deep into an issue, examine advertisements of the times, read the Letters to the Editor for each week (and find out, not surprisingly, that people bitch about the same thing every year: taxes, religion, the country, etc.) and get a listing and a sampling of the hit music for that year. You can also see Life's famous Picture of the Week, watch a newsreel clip, or play a trivia game regarding issues of a particular year. There's also a full Search feature that will scan through all the issues for your particular topic.

You're only given a partial summary of the articles for the week, and not the full text, so journalism students will still need to use microfiche. And while the music is crystal clear, you only get to listen to one sampling per year, and not your pick of the ones shown on the list of the year's best.

Still, there is some joy to be found in browsing what you can read (like the Letters to the Editor) and comparing it to today's newspapers or magazines. For example, one reader wrote; "automobile car manufacturers in this country have been selling their cars based on the strength of bigger and better adjectives in advertising rather than on improvements in design". And that was in 1937.

ONCE YOU GO THROUGH EACH WEEK, YOU'RE DONE. AS MEMORABLE AS THE IMAGES IN *LIFE* WERE, IT WILL ONLY TAKE YOU ONE PASS TO MEMORIZE THEM. SO IF YOU DON'T TAKE LIFE THAT SERIOUSLY, YOU WON'T TAKE *LIFE* THAT SERIOUSLY.

UPSIDE
I FOUND THIS DISC MORE ENTHRALLING THAN DOMINIC DID

DOWNSIDE
THE IMAGES ARE ONLY AS GOOD AS YOUR SCREEN

OVERALL 8
CONCEPT 8 INTERFACE 7
DEPTH 5 DOLLAR VALUE 9

TECH INFO

AVAILABLE: NOW
PRICE: $24.99
SYSTEM: IBM
DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
CREATIVE MULTIMEDIA
513 NW 13TH AVE, STE 400
PORTLAND, OR, 97209
(503) 241-1530
CONTENTS: LISTEN TO THE MUSIC, SEE THE PICTURES, OR SCAN THE ADS.

Angels:
The Mysterious Messengers

Angels is the Ultimate source guide for the celestial fanatic.

BY ALEX KASTEN

It seems that angels are quite the rage these days. *Angels: The Mysterious Messengers* provides a content-rich exploration into all aspects of the presence of angels. In addition to revealing eye-witness encounters, the program allows you to search for angels in history, movies, art, literature and science. The combination of tastefully executed graphics in calming colors, an easily navigable interface design and a soundtrack of New Age music with a slight folk edge all make for a highly enriching multimedia experience.

Angels: The Mysterious Messengers is divided into four sections—Angel Encounters, Angels and You, The Angel World, and The Angel Gallery. The Encounters section allows you to share in real-life testimony from people who have experienced the presence of angels. In the Angel Gallery section, you are initially presented with a floor plan of a museum. Each room in the museum represents a different category (art, literature, music, and film). By clicking on a room with the mouse, the user accesses a rich database of information. Of course, given the recent proliferation of angel-related merchandising, no angel CD-ROM title would be complete without a commercial element and *Angels:*

The Mysterious Messengers is no exception. The Angels & You section is designed to help you get in touch with *your* angel. This section discusses meditation and exercise, and offers a database of groups, meetings, and publications all designed to help you network with other angel enthusiasts and assist you with your search. But if literature and encounter groups aren't enough for you, you may access the angel gift shop, complete with more than 350 products and an 800 number for your convenience. In this section, you can browse through jewelry, greeting cards and garden ornaments, and shop till you drop.

WHETHER YOU BELIEVE IN THEM OR NOT, *ANGELS* HAS IT ALL. THE TASTEFUL GRAPHICS, CALMING SOUNDTRACK, RICH PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS AND EASY NAVIGATION MAKE FOR AN ABSORBING LEARNING EXPERIENCE. WHEN YOU COMPLETE YOUR EXPLORATION INTO THE WORLD OF ANGELS, YOU'LL BE READY TO ADORN YOURSELF AND YOUR HOME WITH THE LATEST IN ANGEL FASHION. JUST DIAL 1-800-D-I-V-I-N-E I-N-T-E-R-V-E-N-T-I-O-N.

UPSIDE
A NICE PRESENTATION OF A HIP SUBJECT

DOWNSIDE
THIS TITLE NEEDS LESS SHOW AND MORE DEPTH!

OVERALL 10
CONCEPT 10 INTERFACE 10
DEPTH 7 DOLLAR VALUE 9

TECH INFO
AVAILABLE: NOW
PRICE: $59.98
SYSTEM: IBM AND MAC
DEVELOPER: DIGITAL RANCH
PUBLISHER: LIVE ENTERTAINMENT INC.
15400 SHERMAN WAY
VAN NUYS, CA 91406
(818) 988-5060
CONTENTS: ANGELS THROUGHOUT HISTORY,

REFERENCE

Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Science

The heck with science: I felt like I was manning the helm of the Nautilus in 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea when I was using this interface.

BY JEFF JAMES

Billed as the "essential multimedia guide to science and technology," Dorling Kindersley's *Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Science* (EES) attempts to be a one-stop multimedia shop for information on chemistry, mathematics, physics and life science. It may not quite reach that lofty goal, but it does offer a host of intriguing and interesting features.

After installation, you're introduced to the interface, which looks as if it was torn from the pages of a Jules Verne novel. It bristles with brass levers, knobs and glowing arcs of electricity. In the center of the console are the four main scientific areas covered in *EES:* mathematics, physics, chemistry and life sciences.

There are a few other noteworthy elements, such as a brass globe (providing information on the Earth and the Universe) and a swirling cloud of atoms (which provides access to a periodic table). The "Quiz Master"—looking much like a 19th-century slot machine—allows you to gamble for the sake of scientific knowledge, while a "Who's Who" option provides a listing of some of history's most important scientists. The spoken narration is polished and professional. Unfortunately, the excellent voice-over work can't compensate for the shallowness of much of the information presented. This is particularly evident in the "Who's Who" section, which should
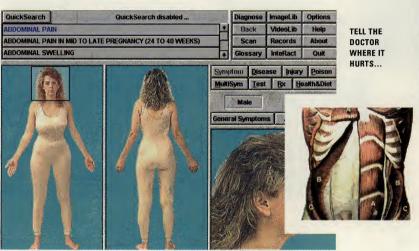
have been dubbed "Who's' Who That We Could Think Of." Although most major scientists are given coverage, a few very large names get a one-line mention or are omitted entirely. Conspicuous by their absence are such scientific heavyweights as Enrico Fermi (Physics), and Tycho Brahe. Incidentally, I found more information on the aforementioned scientists in both *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia* and in *Microsoft Encarta '95.*

This lack of depth extends to the rest of the CD as well. When reading the article on lasers and you want more information about the history and development of lasers, you're out of luck. *EES* doesn't work much better as a research tool. Since it lacks an engine for complex information searches, you'll spend most of your time pointing and clicking through layer after layer of buttons and windows searching for the information you want. A basic index is included to help you find major topics, but it lacks the powerful global search that is essential for serious reference work.

IT'S IDEAL FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS OF MODERN SCIENCE. THE SCARCITY OF IN-DEPTH INFORMATION AND THE LACK OF A USEFUL SEARCH CAPABILITY CONSTITUTE SERIOUS FLAWS, HOWEVER, AND THEY RELEGATE *EES* TO THE POSITION OF A MILDLY ENTERTAINING AND MARGINALLY EDUCATIONAL PRODUCT.

UPSIDE ANOTHER FINE-LOOKING MULTIMEDIA TITLE FROM DK.

DOWNSIDE THIS ONE SEEMS TO BE AIMED AT THE YOUNGER CROWD.

OVERALL 6
CONCEPT 7 INTERFACE 7
DEPTH 5 DOLLAR VALUE 6

TECH INFO
AVAILABLE:: NOW
PRICE: N/A
SYSTEM: IBM
DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
DORLING-KINDERSLEY
MULTIMEDIA
95 MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10016
(800) DKMM-575
CONTENTS: PHYSICS,
CHEMISTRY, BLACK HOLES
AND BUTTERFLIES.

Which planet has 18 moons?
FIND OUT

Home Medical Advisor Pro

TELL THE DOCTOR WHERE IT HURTS...

The dream CD for hypochondriacs, this medical reference work will have you playing doctor all night long

BY DOMINIC GONZALES

I'm not one to use the term "gross" lightly, or at least not outside the realm of magazine publishing, but be forewarned: some of the images on this CD-ROM will put you off lunch for a while. That aside, the *Home Medical Advisor* is a lot like your doctor. A little dry, a little muddled, and very technical.

Besides being a good tool for converting users to vegetarianism, the *Home Medical Advisor* gives you a complete rundown on diseases, medical tests, drugs, and poisons. There are also numerous video clips that show surgical procedures, basic injury applications (like how to apply an Ace bandage), and even how to do certain exercises to help your recovery.

In the Medical Data files, you can analyze a major symptom using a Q&A format, or even keep a personal health and diet file. But if you aren't listening to your own doctor about your health, you probably won't listen to this one either.

So where's the gross-out? Some of the video images are graphic details of surgery, while some of the still images show what look like painful scars and lacerations. It's like going to traffic school to watch the highway fatality movies. Need help imagining this? Go to Leg Injury: Degloving, and you'll never take another escalator again.

Thankfully, there's a Censor mode for families with children that blocks the more gruesome scenes. Timmy won't be tempted to perform that painful brain surgery on his little sister.

The interface is somewhat cumbersome. You simply choose an area where the hurtin' occurs from a male or female subject, but the list of options after you choose the area is absolutely enormous.

DO YOU DIAGNOSE? DO YOU SEARCH THE VIDEOS? DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR? USING THIS CD IS LIKE FINDING OUT WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR CAR BY TAKING IT APART.

UPSIDE A DECENT REFERENCE TOOL TO ANSWER HEALTH QUESTIONS

DOWNSIDE NOT AS GOOD AS YOUR OWN DOCTOR

OVERALL 8
CONCEPT 10 INTERFACE 5
DEPTH 8 DOLLAR VALUE 7

TECH INFO

AVAILABLE: NOW
PRICE: N/A
SYSTEM: IBM
DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
PIXEL PERFECT
10460 S. TROPICAL TRAIL
MERRITT ISLAND, FL, 32952
(407) 777-5353
CONTENTS: NO GUTS, NO GLORY...NO HEALTH PLAN? THIS CD GIVES YOU THE LOWDOWN ON PLENTY OF MEDICAL PROCEDURES, SO IF YOU'RE GOING TO THE HOSPITAL AND YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT THEY'RE GOING TO DO TO YOU, CHECK THIS OUT.

Palmistry

Learn The
Secrets That
Lie Within
The Palm Of
Your Hand

BY ALEX KASTEN

In *Palmistry*, your hostess Aliena, perched atop a Corinthian column and clad in a flowing gown, guides you through an exploration of hand analysis. She assists you in your search to "uncover the destiny carved in your hand." Rather than also offering a reference element with some historical perspective on palmistry, this title is designed to guide you through a reading of your hand.

The design is simple. You are presented with several buttons (called "satellites") that offer reading options. For each option, Aliena appears on-screen and offers her analysis of your palm. To determine the types of lines you have on your palm, different hands appear on screen, all with different types of lines. You must select the hand that most closely resembles your own in order to arrive at an accurate reading. The categories of lines and other palmistry readings include romance, fate line, heart line, life line, and lastly, a "final reading" button which provides you with your personal analysis based on whichever hands and lines you selected.

As an entertainment program, *Palmistry* succeeds as a novelty item with a touch of kitsch.

Although it's rather laborious to make it through all the satellite button categories, the surprising revelations of the final reading make it worth the effort. I was certainly pleased to learn that I'm a hot-headed perfectionist.

However, the title fails in some technical areas. The bad graphics of the sample hands and lines make it difficult to identify which example most closely resembles your own hand. Although it doesn't make much sense to mention the words "accuracy" and "palmistry" in the same breath, I was never quite sure if I was getting a reading that accurately reflected what was on my palm. Furthermore, the background art and music do not lend themselves to an overall spiritual experience.
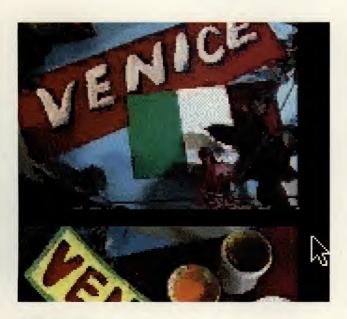
PALMISTRY PROFESSES TO BE A "FUN-FILLED TICKET TO SELF-AWARENESS," BUT FOR MY MONEY, I'D RATHER HIRE THE REAL DEAL FOR A LIVE, ONE-ON-ONE READING. BUT IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A PARTY FAVOR AND ARE READY TO RETIRE THE OUIJA BOARD, THEN PALMISTRY IS FOR YOU.

UPSIDE
COOL GRAPHICS, FUNNY SUBJECT

DOWNSIDE
SLOW RESPONSE TIME, INDEFINITE READINGS

OVERALL 3
CONCEPT 9 INTERFACE 5
DEPTH 6 DOLLAR VALUE 5

TECH INFO
AVAILABLE: NOW
PRICE: $59.98
SYSTEM: IBM AND MAC
DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
EMERALD ENTERTAINMENT
CONTENTS: WILL YOU LIVE A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE? WILL YOUR LOVER BE FAITHFUL UNTIL DEATH? FIND OUT ALL THIS AND MORE IN THE EXCITING WORLD OF PALMISTRY.

QuickTime— The CD 1994

BY TODD KRIEGER

When I was younger I would occasionally have trouble sleeping and to cure this, I would often pick up a copy of Gustave Flaubert's 19th-century masterpiece *Education Sentimentale*, thumb through a page or two and then drift off into a blissful sleep. Unfortunately, I'm still prone to bouts of insomnia but, now that I'm a tech-head, I find I need new and different fodder for my dreams. Thank heavens for *QuickTime—The CD*, a new media sleeping pill, conveniently packaged in disc format and sure to send you right off to dreamland with no more than a single keystroke.

The basic idea of taking the best QuickTime movies, compiling them and throwing them on a CD-ROM is in itself not a horrendous concept. But adding nothing to the disc in the way of biographies of the creators, tools utilized, or even a scroll bar when the movies play, this all smacks of either laziness, low budgets, lack of creativity or all three. In addition, the movies, which the copy says "were originally designed for playback on high-performance computers and may suffer on low-end machines and CD-ROM drives," suffer from resolution problems so extreme that it's often difficult to see why they may have won a prize. Sumeria, publisher of this QuickTime compendium, is primarily known for its in-depth nature series *Ocean Life I-IV*, and while those discs are not exactly caffeine jolts for the dying, this title is the CD-ROM equivalent of sitting through a day of Film 101 screenings at USC: painful, pretentious, ponderous and pedantic.

That said, there are some QuickTime movies which nonetheless manage to shine through this morass and light up the screen. *QuickTime—The CD* is actually a two-CD set. Disc One has the categories, Animation, Commercial, Documentary and Education, while Disc Two features a category called Experimental, Humor, Micromovies, Music Video and Narrative. Both discs have their gems so, should this CD—for whatever reason—fall into your hands, be sure to plow through both of them.

MY PERSONAL FAVORITE IS A LITTLE MOVIE CALLED *ONIGIRI*. IT SEEMS ONIGIRI IS THE LITTLE-KNOWN JAPANESE NAME FOR THE MAC'S SYSTEM 7-J, AS WELL AS FOR A RICE SNACK FOOD. THE FLICK TELLS THE TALE OF A YOUNG JAPANESE GIRL LOOKING ALL OVER AKIHABARA, A SMALL JAPANESE TOWN, FOR ONIGIRI (SYSTEM 7) TO USE ON HER MAC. OTHER FAVORITES INCLUDE A SERIES WHICH CAN ONLY BE CALLED QUICKTIME NOIR, SERIOUSLY TONGUE-IN-CHEEK CLIPS LIKE *ATL CRIMEWEAR*, *DEATH TV* AND A HILARIOUS TAKE ON CORPORATE HYPE CALLED *SURGICAL IMPLANTS*, BUILT AROUND THE CONCEPT THAT TRAINED CYBERNETIC PROFESSIONALS CAN UPGRADE YOU WITH THINGS LIKE AUTO-CAFFEINATORS TO GIVE YOU ROUND-THE-CLOCK PRODUCTIVITY.

UPSIDE IT'S LIKE A MOVIE FESTIVAL ON CD-ROM

DOWNSIDE THERE'S NOT MUCH INTERACTION

OVERALL	3
CONCEPT	6
INTERFACE	2
DEPTH	3
DOLLAR VALUE	3

TECH INFO

AVAILABLE: NOW
PRICE: N/A
SYSTEM: IBM/MAC
DEVELOPER:/PUBLISHER: SUMERIA
CONTENTS: QUICKTIME FILM FESTIVAL

REFERENCE

The Mega Movie Guide

SYSTEM: MPC

RATING: 3

The Mega Movie Guide fails to meet the challenges of the movie guide genre. You have the choice of looking at biography, awards, video and a video library. The clips from the library are a good idea but the films featured don't cover the needs of most video renters and cinemaphiles. Cinemania is a much better title that offers the user more options and a more extensive reference bank.
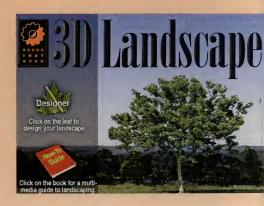
3D Landscape

SYSTEM:MPC

RATING:7

Most homeowners want to make their home look as nice as it possibly can. Landscaping can be made easier and more efficient by using this program. You can find out what looks and works best for your home and climate. This program is easy to use, the interface is very good and it allows you to explore dozens of options.

Skier's Encyclopedia

SYSTEM:MPC

RATING: 7

Learning to ski can be, as I've found, very painful. The Skier's Encyclopedia attempts to solve this problem. The interface gives you the option to take lessons, explore the almanac, and look at equipment. The lessons are extensive and feature video footage that helps to explain skiing better than any book. The next best thing is an instructor with a thick Nordic accent.

Space: A Visual History

SYSTEM:MAC

RATING: 5

The United States is very proud of the space program which is chronicled in this program. Space allows you to chose from four categories: missions, science, index and time line. The program concentrates on film footage to highlight the achievements of manned space flight. The Play All option is 90 minutes of footage that begins with Mercury exploration and ends with the Space Shuttle. This program is good for both history and science buffs, but don't expect a cornucopia of exciting images.

Gadget

Gadget is easily one of the most stunning and intriguing interactive movies to date.

BY JEREMY BERG

Are you one of those people who's been wondering what an interactive movie is since the time you first heard the term? The fact of the matter is that it's far too soon to define this genre. Can one call a game like *Myst* an interactive movie, in which you experience an intense gaming situation that encompasses a strong narrative with a beginning, middle and end? Or is a game like Philip's *Burn: Cycle* the true definition of an interactive movie, where the program is part game and part live-action, and actors serve as filler between shooting games and challenging puzzles? The truth is that, at this point in time, an interactive movie can be one of many things, even something that you watch unfold before your eyes, like Haruhiko Shono's *Gadget*. This unique interactive movie is for the most part a mystery that you must solve by traveling around a futuristic retro-world. This strange, undefined world is a place where people are cold and the surroundings are even colder. An environment, you might say, where the likes of David Lynch and Orson Welles might feel comfortable.

You start your journey in a hotel

room, where you pick up your suitcase and leave. You then make your way to the elevator where you encounter an odd-looking, green-faced boy. *Who* this boy is you may never know, but he constantly haunts you throughout the game. The kid splits, and in a moment, you'll realize he's swapped suitcases with you. Once in the lobby, your adventure truly begins. There you meet Slowslop, a man you will be in contact with for your entire journey. He instructs you to establish contact with a scientist named Horselover and find out what he's up to. From there, you get aboard a high-tech train and start collecting information from the various travellers and scientists you encounter. You also start to find five strange gadgets, which you'll keep in your new, empty suitcase. You're instructed to bring these to Horselover so that his creation can be completed. It turns out that a comet is due to collide with Earth at any moment and that Horselover is building a small spacecraft, called the Ark, in order to escape imminent destruction. As you race to find all the gadgets, your journey becomes darker, and you begin to wonder if you're truly helping Horselover with his plan or if you're just a pawn in some madman's devious game.

There's no doubt about it, director Haruhiko Shono's interactive movie *Gadget* is an adventure that draws you in and keeps you entertained until the final frames. You are in constant interaction with numerous characters, and you never really know who's telling you the truth or who you can trust, if anyone.

WHETHER YOUR DEFINITION OF AN INTERACTIVE MOVIE IS A GAMING EXPERIENCE WHERE YOU MUST STRATEGICALLY SOLVE PUZZLES IN ORDER TO WIN, OR WHETHER YOU PREFER AN ADVENTURE THAT YOU WATCH UNFOLD BEFORE YOUR EYES, THERE'S NO DENYING THAT *GADGET* IS ONE OF THE MOST UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENTS TO HIT THE INTERACTIVE WORLD. IT'S FRESH, IT'S FASCINATING AND IT WILL LEAVE YOU WITH THE FEELING THAT YOU HAVE JUST EXPERIENCED A NEW FORM OF FILMMAKING. THERE IS NO STRESS OR STRAIN INVOLVED, JUST PURE ENTERTAINMENT, AND THAT'S WHAT COUNTS.

UPSIDE
FANTASTIC GRAPHICS, INTRIGUING STORY

DOWNSIDE
IT'S COLD, STERILE, AND VERY LONELY IN CYBERSPACE

CONCEPT **8** INTERFACE **10**
DEPTH **8** DOLLAR VALUE **6**

OVERALL RATINGS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Creature S

This game combines two games into one. Unfortunately, one game is horrendous and the other one doesn't make up for it.

BY JEFFREY ADAM YOUNG

The first time I saw *Creature Shock* was at the European Computer Trade Show last Spring. At that time it was just a non-interactive demo, but it immediately caught my eye. Virgin Interactive Entertainment's new crop of games all seemed to tout cool 3-D animation and *Creature Shock* was no exception.

This new creation from Argonaut Software (those wacky Brits who created the Super Nintendo game *Starfox*) has one of the most impressive introductions of any game around. The back-story unfolds in a mini-movie with 3-D computer-generated art, including digital actors whose movements are somewhere between real body motion and the marionettes from the old Sci-Fi TV show, *Thunderbirds*.

According to the movie, in the year 2023, Earth's population increase has created an unbearable environment. One of your colleagues was sent out in a spaceship to find new places to colonize and she never came back. There are suspicions that an enormous alien craft in the area may have taken her prisoner or that it may even have destroyed her.

If this storyline sounds suspiciously familiar, you'd better stop thinking along those lines. The nice people at Argonaut and Virgin wouldn't outright *steal* the plot from a major motion picture series that starts with an "A" and ends with "L-I-E-N." Well, would they?

After viewing the fancy intro, which by all means should win some award for computer animation, you're given a behind-the-ship view of your voyage to the place where communication was halted. What's striking is the incredible decrease in graphic quality from the scenes you were just viewing. This arcade-style shoot-em-up section looks like it came from a Sega Genesis cartridge. And the worst part is that you can't control your ship with a Joystick: The game only accepts mouse control.

Once you plow your way through this first level, which takes no more than an hour, you see another sequence of remarkable animation. Then, surprise! You get another inter-

hock

THIS GAME LOOKS
GREAT, BUT LOOKS
AREN'T EVERYTHING.

active sequence, but now the graphics are just as good as the non-interactive movie sequences. Just when I was ready to write this game off, they pulled a fast one on me. This time you're given a first-person perspective with a sort of *Myst*-on-roller-skates quality. As you move deeper into the winding caverns, you'll encounter all sorts of 3-D animated bad guys. Your object here is to shoot at their weak spots by moving your cursor to the glowing colorful patch on their body and pressing the button on the mouse.

Unfortunately, that's about it. Despite the diversity of creatures you encounter, wasting them is as simple as pointing and clicking. This grows tiresome after a while and the novelty of *Creature Shock* wears off.

SO WHILE *CREATURE SHOCK* IS EXCITING TO WATCH AND MIXES USER INTERACTION WITH A 3-D COMPUTER ENVIRONMENT IN A NEW WAY, IT ULTIMATELY FAILS BY BECOMING A REPETITIVE POINT-AND-CLICK SHOOT-'EM-UP.

UPSIDE
VERY NICE-LOOKING

DOWNSIDE
REPETITIVE, MINIMAL INTERACTION

CONCEPT 5 INTERFACE 3
DEPTH 5 DOLLAR VALUE 4

OVERALL RATINGS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

GAMES

Head Can

BY ALEX KASTEN

From ION, the producer of David Bowie's *Jump* interactive CD-ROM (see review in issue 1.1) comes *Head Candy*, a sound and light show that features more than 40 minutes of original music from recording artist/producer Brian Eno (who shares co-writing credits with Robert Fripp on two tracks). With the use of special rainbow-effect, image-multiplying *Head Candy* glasses (included with the CD-ROM), the swirling animations and bouncing balls seem to literally jump off the computer screen and into the room, creating a digital kaleidoscope effect. (Despite the warning on the box, I wore the glasses on a journey through the house and found the images to be equally entertaining to the ones I'd seen on the screen—*Ed*)

The *Head Candy* experience begins with the slick Ion logo, which, if considered on its own, would receive a ten-point rating. Once *Head Candy* loads, you're presented with a series of bouncing spheres that enter the screen. Each sphere represents a different track of music and a different visual experience. Once you select a sphere, the experience is relatively passive, much like watching a lava lamp or a fish tank. You simply sit back, put on the glasses, turn out the lights, and take in the sights and sounds, all the while hoping that no one else enters the room.

Be forewarned: the *Head Candy* application program is a monster, weighing in at about 8 MB. Unless

you assign it about 8 MB of free RAM (which the producers recommend) you may have problems. Even with this much memory, viewing still may be a bit choppy. However, central to the *Head Candy* experience is the soundtrack, and the 16-bit stereo audio is exceptional, as is the artistic quality of the graphics. If you're a fan of Brian Eno, you will most likely enjoy these new tracks, which include *Castro Haze*, *Manila Envelope*, *Spunk Worship*, *Beast*, and *Alloy Balcony & Jets Overhead*.

It's true that *Head Candy* is unlike any other CD-ROM experience. But, like my old college anthropology professor used to say, it's a lot of stew and very little rabbit. It ships in a stylishly funky box, complete with a collectable pog and kaleidoscopic glasses. The specs succeed in making the viewing experience more of a show than simply a display on a computer screen. But once the initial "wow" factor wears off, *Head Candy* leaves you wanting more options and more depth. If you load *Head Candy* at your next party and want people to stay for the duration, you'd better be prepared with good food and lots to drink.
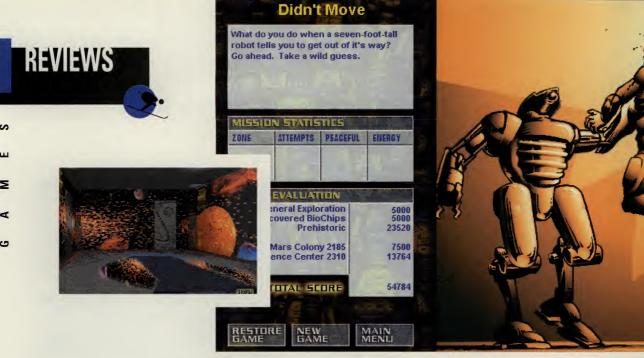
DON'T STARE AT THIS IMAGE TOO LONG OR YOU'LL RISK FALLING INTO AN HYPNOTIC TRANCE

THE BOTTOM LINE: WITH ITS SLICK CONTENT, QUALITY AUDIO, AND FUNKY PACKAGING, *HEAD CANDY* IS AN IMPRESSIVE PRODUCT AND A GOOD CONVERSATION-PIECE. AS A PARTY NOVELTY, IT OFFERS SOME MIND-BENDING SHORT-TERM ENTERTAINMENT, BUT YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO RELY ON IT TO KEEP YOUR GUESTS ENTERTAINED FOR HOURS. HOWEVER, WITH THE RIGHT COMBINATION OF GOOD FRIENDS, AND EXCEPTIONAL PARTY FARE, *HEAD CANDY* CAN HELP TURN YOUR NEXT MUNDANE GATHERING INTO A HIT PARTY THAT WILL BE TALKED ABOUT FOR A LONG TIME.

UPSIDE
BRAIN ENO'S FIRST CONSUMER INTER-ACTIVE PROJECT

DOWNSIDE
BRAIN ENO'S AMBIENT MUSIC IS DROLL

CONCEPT 7 INTERFACE 7
DEPTH 6 DOLLAR VALUE 5

OVERALL RATINGS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Didn't Move

What do you do when a seven-foot-tall robot tells you to get out of it's way? Go ahead. Take a wild guess.

MISSION STATISTICS

ZONE	ATTEMPTS	PEACEFUL	ENERGY

EVALUATION

eneral Exploration	5000
covered BioChips	5000
Prehistoric	23520
Mars Colony 2185	7500
ence Center 2310	13764
TOTAL SCORE	54784

RESTORE GAME   NEW GAME   MAIN MENU

The Journeyman Project Tu

To boldly go where no man can go.

BY GARY SAMUELSON

Tall, shimmering buildings loom before me, the camera pulls back to reveal that the entire city is floating in the clouds. Suddenly everything is "uncreated" in a flash of light. The theme is time travel and evil forces who sabotage history. It's a good-guy/bad-guy game that reads through a pair of ski goggles about a quarter of the size of the computer screen.

After the city pops, the game opens quietly in an apartment. A clock radio wakes me to the events of the day. The apartment comes complete with a "high-rez" 4-D environment system." I want to be there. My 486 is an abacus compared to the technology here. I receive a message through my "Artificial intelligence module" about an appointment at the "Temporal

Security Annex". I must move on or risk uncreation.

I am a member of the Temporal Protectorate, I must prevent uncreation. Uncreation is the aftermath of a diabolical time change that prevents the future from existing. When time is sabotaged, or ripped, I must rush off to the time machine at the Temporal Security Annex and jump over this temporal distortion before it reaches the present. Then from the most distant past I bring forward a record of history that was placed there solely for comparison to the temporally distorted present. The logic is lost here because the game's intro shows the entire city being uncreated.

The game explains how one can avoid the distortions by jumping over the rip but never gets into the details of returning to an uncreated city. Maybe the Temporal Annex is somewhere else. Nevertheless, the computer

at the Annex does exist and is able to compare the history record brought back with the present and can calculate were the temporal distortions may have occurred.

Now I must go back and repair time. The effects and realism I

rbo

encounter on my second time jump are fantastic. The game welcomes me into a far-away world made alien by its distant past. It's like flying modern aircraft back in time to watch the Wright Brothers' first try at aviation.

At this point I encounter my first obstacle. I get shot by a dart that penetrates my "BioSupport" suit. I quickly glance at my reference to learn that I'm wearing "Exoskeletal armor plating" complete with "Impact Compensation Coils". Wow! Some dart. The Temporal Protectorate might as well have given me a loin cloth.

The *Journeyman Project Turbo* has problems with both logic and presentation. Although the game is exciting I'm put off by these and other annoyances. Back to the mighty dart example. I'm informed that this dart is poisonous and allows me only five minutes of consciousness. However this is a very long five minutes that permits me plenty of time to explore the surroundings. During my search I discover a full-motion video of a very

real-looking mouse vivisection (mouse brain-surgery) and a horrible sound track.

I encounter more problems when I'm on the Mars colony. I leave the pressurized environment to enter a labyrinth filled with evil music. The music is modern and driven by synthetic drums backed by "oooo"s and "aaaaa"s. The noise is unbearable and I turn the volume on my sound system way down, almost off. On my return to the colony I have my neck ripped out by a huge robot. Because the volume was turned down I couldn't hear the robot telling me,"Out of my way, human, or die,"

Journeyman has a great concept. Its intro and plot development are good. There's a strong sense of realism and initial believability through its attention to detail. However, once the journey begins, *The Journeyman Project* falls apart. A better soundtrack would have gone a long way. Also, my faith in the story's science was insulted by the paradoxical difficulties presented to me in the puzzles.

IN SUMMARY, *JOURNEYMAN* HAS A GREAT CONCEPT ENHANCED BY EXCELLENT VISUAL EFFECTS. HOWEVER, LEAVE IT ON THE SHELF, BECAUSE ITS HORRIBLE SOUND TRACK AND POOR LOGIC WILL DRIVE MOST USERS NUTS. THIS GAME TEMPTED ME BACK MANY TIMES BEFORE I LEARNED TO STAY AWAY. IF PURCHASED, PLAY IT LOUD AND ENJOY THE PAIN.

UPSIDE
COOL GRAPHICS,
INNOVATIVE GAME

DOWNSIDE
THIS RE-HASH OF AN
OLDER GAME DOESN'T
CUT IT

CONCEPT **9** INTERFACE **3**
DEPTH **7** DOLLAR VALUE **2**

OVERALL RATINGS

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

GAMES

YOU'D LOOK LIKE THIS TOO, IF YOU WERE FORCED TO PLAY THIS CD-ROM

Story

Analysis

Maze

Credits

Gothic: a tale that is set in a remote setting

The Fall of the House of Usher

BY HIRAM TODD NORMAN

UPSIDE
AN AMAZINGLY CHILLING ORIGINAL TEXT WITH CRITICAL ANALYSIS

DOWNSIDE
THERE COULD HAVE BEEN SO MUCH MORE

OVERALL 7
CONCEPT 7 INTERFACE 6
DEPTH 4 DOLLAR VALUE 7

TECH INFO

AVAILABLE: NOW
PRICE: $24.95
SYSTEM: MAC OR IBM
DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER:
WESTWIND MEDIA
BOX 5833
LAKE ARIEL PA 18436
(800) 937-8555
CONTENTS: GOTHIC GOOD-IES WITH RODERICK U. AND HIS DEAD/ALIVE MISSUS. YOU CAN'T KEEP A GOOD WOMAN DOWN!

Some CD-ROM titles are no more interesting than books on tape and such is the case with *The Fall of the House of Usher*, the new media adaptation of Edgar Allen Poe's gothic tale of horror. This classic tale on CD-ROM pays homage to both Poe and his historic work of fiction.
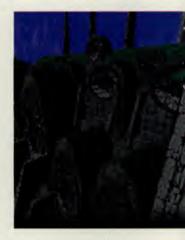
Upon entering the house, a menu comes up, giving the user very few choices: Story, Genre, and Maze.

The focus of the program is on the story itself. The user is able to listen to a narrator as well as follow a printed text. Pictures help to illustrate the action, but they don't do a very good job. Many children's CD-ROMs do a far better job of presenting a story.

Genre information is another option for the user. In this section there's plenty of discussion, which proves to be the highlight of *The Fall of the House of Usher*. A discussion of Poe, his work, this story in particular, and a look at the whole gothic/romantic genre all help to enhance a rather boring program. You can look at a glossary of terms that help to familiarize your with the language of Poe.

The Maze is the final choice in the interface and it's certainly the poorest. The best way to describe the maze is as a quiz. Who wants to answer Poe-oriented questions? The maze is the definite weak point of what could have been an interesting program.

THE CREATORS OF *THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER* SHOULD TAKE A CUE FROM THE LIVING BOOKS CHILDREN'S SERIES. THERE IS VERY LITTLE INTERAC-TION IN WHAT IS, AFTER ALL, SUPPOSED TO BE A DEMONSTRATION OF INTERAC-TIVE MEDIA. THIS CD-ROM DOES VERY LITTLE TO MAKE POE A MORE INTER-ESTING OR ACCESSIBLE WRITER.

Comedy Central's
Sports Shorts

IN THIS DISC, COMEDY IS PRETTY AND BORING.

Being a professional baseball player is probably the only job where it's perfectly acceptable to scratch your groin in front of large groups of people.
-Tom Kenny

UPSIDE
A REALLY PRETTY PRESENTATION

DOWNSIDE
WORSE THAN A VIDEOTAPE

OVERALL **3**
CONCEPT **2** INTERFACE **5**
DEPTH **2** DOLLAR VALUE **6**

TECH INFO

AVAILABLE: NOW
PRICE: $19.95
SYSTEM: IBM
DEVELOPER: HBO DOWNTOWN PRODS
PUBLISHER: TIME WARNER INTERACTIVE
2210 WEST OLIVE AVE, BURBANK CA 91506
(818) 955-9999
CONTENTS: A FEW GOOD LAUGHS, A LOT OF HECKLER FODDER, AND JIMMY WALKER.

BY JEFFREY TSCHILTSCH

Sports Shorts is a collection of 60 video clips taken from various stand-up comedy shows found on the Comedy Central cable channel and digitized for playback using Microsoft's Video for Windows. An attractive menu system divides the jokes into the various sports, such as football, baseball, basketball, etc. After selecting the sport topic you then choose one of the available comedians and watch him deliver his shtick. An index feature allows you to select videos by comedian rather than by sporting genre.

Besides the clips of comedians in clubs, there are also three "archive" clips taken from old newsreels. None are what I would consider "comedy bits," unless you think highlights of the Yankees winning their fifth world series in a row or seeing some daredevil getting shot out of a cannon are particularly funny.

Sports Shorts also includes a screen saver that will randomly play back video clips or display still images, but you'll need plenty of spare room on your hard-drive to accommodate more than a couple of routines.

The video playback is very smooth and never skips to keep up with the audio. The playback window size is a bit larger than the usual "quarter-screen" windows seen on discs of this type. In most cases the quality of the picture is quite good, but some clips have more jagged edges than others. For some reason the audio volume varies quite a bit from clip to clip.

AFTER WATCHING A FEW CLIPS AND BOUNCING AROUND THE MENUS WITH THE MOUSE, THE BURNING QUESTION THAT COMES TO MIND IS "WHY?" WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PUTTING SOMETHING LIKE THIS ON CD-ROM? WHERE'S THE FASCINATION IN WATCHING DIGITIZED VIDEO ON YOUR PC IN A LITTLE WINDOW WHEN YOU COULD WATCH THE VERY SAME THING ON YOUR TV VIA YOUR VCR, FULL SCREEN, 30 FRAMES PER SECOND, IN MILLIONS OF COLORS? ARE MENUS THE PINNACLE OF INTERACTIVE MULTIMEDIA CREATIVITY? TO TOP IT OFF, MOST OF THESE ROUTINES ARE ONLY MILDLY FUNNY AND SEVERAL HAVE VERY LITTLE TO DO WITH SPORTS AT ALL. IF YOU'RE A SPORTS FAN LOOKING FOR LAUGHS, YOU'LL HAVE MORE FUN RENTING FOOTBALL FOLLIES AT THE VIDEO STORE THAN "INTERACTING" WITH *SPORTS SHORTS*.
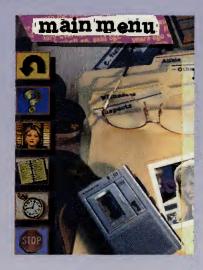
Who Killed Taylor French?

SYSTEM: MPC

RATING: 6

Ninety per cent of all murder cases are solved in the first six hours. That's the statistic you'll hear at the start of this crime-solving game. Taylor French, a reporter with a long list of enemies, has been killed and you have to solve the crime by interviewing suspects, looking at the crime scene and other sources. Throughout the game you're aided by an assistant, played by *Twin Peaks'* Sheryl Lee. This game's pretty well-made but slow at times.

Ghosts

SYSTEM: MPC

RATING: 8

Paranormal activity has been debated for centuries. Once the focus of superstition, it has been virtually disproved by the legitimate scientific community, or has it? *Ghosts* is an interactive adventure that explores all sides of this debate. The program features actual footage and extensive information to rekindle the paranormal debate. This program is fun and sometimes quite scary.

How To Be Perfect

SYSTEM: MPC

RATING: 7

How to be Perfect is a campy etiquette how-to program hosted by the prince of perfection, Bobcat Goldthwait. Everything from how to ask a girl out to what to wear and how to groom are covered in this title. The best part of the program is the use of '50s education clips. Those campy youth-suppression reels are used to guide you through this light-hearted question-and-answer game. *How to be Perfect* is humorous and original. The interface is simple and the graphics are excellent.

National Lampoon's Blind Date

SYSTEM: MPC

RATING: 2

The name "National Lampoon" used to stand for original, razor-sharp, humor. Unfortunately this is no longer the case. The latest insult to the National Lampoon name is *National Lampoon's Blind Date*, a stupid, sexist excuse for a game. The interaction in this game is watching video clips that respond to your answers. The disc is not nearly as entertaining as *How to be Perfect*, which was written by former *Lampoon* editors. The problem with this program is the questions are dumb and the answers are even dumber. *National Lampoon's Blind Date* is about as funny as a root canal.

FRINGEWARE

BY MIKKI HALPIN

Our guide to weird, offb
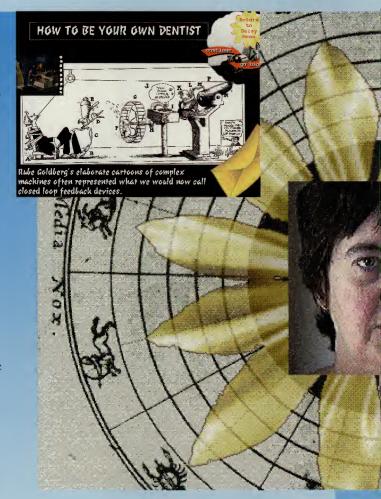
A s multimedia gets more and more hyped, the electronic underground is becoming more viable. While executives at Big Business, Inc. are still scratching their heads to figure out what the interactive market is, activists, artists and underground types are already taking the leap with their personal visions.

Women and Technology, by Christine Tamblyn, is a CD-ROM about the intersection of gender and technology. Tamblyn explores the metaphor of woman as machine in both domestic and industrial settings. *Women and Technology* investigates the historical and cultural interactions of women and machines through lyrical essays, QuickTime movies, and grungy, almost gothically tattered graphics. The central motif is a daisy, with topical petals, which the user can click on to move into various historical themes and issues, such as "Cyborgs," or "Industrial Revolution." Within each area is historical material, notes from the artist, movies and more, like a beautiful pop-up book, with all chapters seamlessly integrated. Far from the slick PhotoShopped appearance of much computer art, Tamblyn's work has an almost hand-made feel, appropriate to this very personal piece. Embedded in the disc are several handwritten "letters" to the user, in which she talks about her relationship to the machines she uses, and the thoughts and experiences she had while creating the disc.

Queers in History is a fun database combining history with activism, empowerment, and computer technology. The program lists hundreds of gays, lesbians and bisexuals throughout time, gives brief biographical information for each one. You can search by dates, names, profession, birthplace, and more. (Hmmm, I'm from New York, wonder if any of my old schoolmates….) You can also print your lists out, and there are bibliographic refences for further research. Though the interface is nothing to write home about, there is a pretty funny game included called "Queeries" and you can add (or out) your own favorite homos if you like. *Queers in History* was recently updated with even more names and information.

Blam! has caused a lot of controversy in its short life. When the makers uploaded a few of the articles from this in-your-face electronic magazine to AOL, it was promptly

removed for obscenity and inflammatory imagery. Well, what do you expect from a publication with such contributors as Tom Metzger and an interface which may, literally, cause sea sickness? But *Blam!* has stuff of literary value as well, including an amazing piece by Kim Gordon, of the musical group Sonic Youth, about the technology of music, and a reprint of Howard Rheingold's musings about cyber-communities. Each article is laid out in a startling manner and the sonic accompaniments the editors of *Blam!* have chosen for you are nothing less than disturbing. Not for the faint of heart.

HOW TO BE YOUR OWN DENTIST

Rube Goldberg's elaborate cartoons of complex machines often represented what we would now call closed loop feedback devices.

eat, and underground electronic publishing

Thunk! is another electronic 'zine. It functions like a pseudo TV network, turning your mouse into a "remote" so you can channel-surf. The programs include "Slacker 90210" ("Tonight's Episode: The girls all shop at a thrift store!"), and "Whatever Happened to Ross Perot?" Actually, there isn't much here, but what there is is pretty good. The graphics are cool, old-school comic book-style, and the sound is sampled from every arcade game you've ever played. Some of the material is a bit dated, like a Movie of the Week about Amy Fisher and Saddam Hussein, but it still works.

Dear CD-ROM Power Enthusiasts:

The first 50 people to respond to the reader survey below will receive a free CD-ROM game from Domark Software, just for answering the questions and returning this survey to us! Your responses will help us determine our readers' habits, purchasing scope and preferences. The results of this research will help us serve you better. The sooner we receive your responses, the better your chances of winning!!!!

CD-ROM POWER'S READER SERVICE QUESTIONS:

[1] Age:
A] Under 18
B] 18-24
C] 25-34
D] Over 35

[2] Sex:
A] Male
B] Female

[3] What is your annual household income?
A] Less than $25,000
B] $25,000—$34,000
C] $35,000—$44,000
D] $45,000—$54,000
E] Over $55,000

[4] Highest level of education attained:
A] High school
B] Some college
C] Graduated college
D] Advanced degree

5] How many CD-ROM titles do you plan to purchase within the next six months?
A] 1-2
B] 3-5
C] 6-7
D] 7 or more

[6] Which category of CD-ROM titles do you most often purchase?
A] Reference
B] Games
C] Educational
D] Other

[7] What multimedia systems do you currently use?
A] IBM PC or compatible
B] 386
C] 486
D] Pentium
E] Macintosh
F] Performa
G] Centris
H] Power PC
I] Other

[8] Where are you currently using your multimedia system(s)?
A] Home
B] Work
C] Both

[9] How would you describe yourself, as a computer user?
A] Novice
B] Intermediate
C] Advanced

[10] Do you use the Internet?
A] Yes
B] No

[11] How much RAM do you have in your primary multimedia system?
A] 2MB
B] 4MB
C] 8MB
D] 16+MB

[12] How many hours per week do you use your multimedia system(s)?
A] 1-3
B] 3-6
C] 6-10
D] 10 or more

[13] From which of the following sources did you purchase hardware peripherals and/or software?
A] Computer store/dealer
B] Consumer electronic store
C] Catalog
D] Direct from manufacturer/ad
E] Specialty software store
F] Toy store
G] Department store
H] None of these

[14] Which of the following reasons helped determine the purchase of your multimedia system(s)?
A] Price/performance ratio
B] Availability of software applications
C] Speed
D] Brand name/company's reputation
E] Recommendations
F] Articles/product reviews in magazines
G] Other

[15] Do you use an on-line service? If so, which one?
A] America Online
B] CompuServe
C] Prodigy
D] Delphi
E] GEnie
F] Other

[16] Please check those that apply?

Currently use   Plan to buy
_____ Cellular phone
_____ VCR
_____ Fax/modeDesktop computer
_____ Notebook computer
_____ PDA
       [Personal Digital Assistant]

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

PLEASE INCLUDE

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE #: _____

RETURN THIS SURVEY FORM TO:

DIANE K. DARAKJIAN CD-ROM POWER
9171 Wilshire Blvd., Ste 300
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

CYCLONE CD-ROM NOTEBOOK!